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THE
WARRINGTONS ABROAD:

OR
TWELVE MONTHS IN GERMANY, ITALY,
AND EGYPT.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.



SEELEY, JACKSON, AND HALLIDAY, 54 FLEET STREET.
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THE WARRINGTONS ABROAD.

CHAPTER I.

‘HURRAH!’ cried young Martin Warrington, bursting into a room in Sunnington Hall, where his three sisters usually spent their mornings. ‘I say, girls, three cheers for the doctor! You’ve heard the glorious news, of course?’

‘News! what news?’ exclaimed the youngest of the party, springing up from the piano, at which she had been zealously practising, and seizing the cap which he had already three times thrown into the air.

‘Can’t you guess, Annie?’ interposed her eldest sister, a delicate-looking girl of about nineteen, who had been lying on the sofa most of the morning, and seemed rather vexed at this noisy intrusion. ‘I can, I’m sure. Boys’ news are always something about holidays. You’ve got another week this summer, Martin, haven’t you?’

‘In honour of Dr. Radcliffe’s new baby,’ added the second sister smiling, as she looked up from some accounts, over which she had been deeply engaged.

‘List of subscriptions to the Clothing Club!’ said Martin, reading over his sister’s shoulder. ‘Dear me, Florence, how good we are growing! Better at accounts than at guesses though, I

hope, for you're far enough from my mark. The cheers were for *your* doctor, and not *mine*, Sophia. But you haven't heard, it seems, that he thinks a holiday might do *you* good: not a paltry week though, but a whole twelvemonth, or more.'

'A twelvemonth!' exclaimed Florence and Annie at once, glancing first at each other, and then at Martin, who was too full of his news to keep them long waiting.

'Yes,' he continued; 'and the best of it is, that as Maxwell was just thinking of going on his travels, and mamma is not overstrong,—as Annie was going to lose her governess, and I wasn't to stop long at Dr. Radcliffe's school,—why, papa has decided to kill all the birds with one stone, and take us on to the Continent for at least a year. There! what do you say to that?'

Well, Annie didn't know what to say. She was just beside herself with happiness. What girl of thirteen, as lively and active, as eager to see everything that was to be seen, and to learn everything that was to be learnt, as she was, would have been otherwise?

Sophia also was pleased—very decidedly so; and although for another person what she actually said might have seemed discouraging, yet, for her, the excitement which she evinced was extraordinary. Quite cheering, Mrs. Warrington thought, when she entered the room a few minutes afterwards, and a good omen for the success of the plan. For Sophia did not often now take a deep interest in anything: for many months she had been in a weak, listless, and nervous state of health, and a source of great anxiety to both parents; nor was it until after a long and fruitless trial of the effects of various medicines and careful nursing, that this scheme had been decided on, in the hope that constant change of air and scene might in time restore her health and spirits.

Nor did there appear to be any drawback to prevent the experiment from having a fair trial ; for Mr. Warrington was a wealthy man, and expense was, therefore, no consideration. He was also an accomplished gentleman, and had travelled much in his youth ; while now, having no demands upon his time, and all his interest being centered in his own family, he was perfectly ready and inclined to devote this year to their benefit and pleasure.

Had Sophia been at all aware that any of the family felt otherwise than indebted to her, as the cause of all this anticipated pleasure, that might have marred her enjoyment ; but this was not the case. Martin, however, quickly made this discovery, for he immediately read in his favourite sister Florence's face an expression of the deepest disappointment and vexation ; but his exclamation of,—‘ Well, I declare ! Flo is actually sorry about it ! ’ was instantly hushed down by her, and lost in the general buzz of conversation : while she, unwilling to find herself in the unamiable position of an isolated malcontent, made her escape out of the room on the very first opportunity.

Perhaps it would have been hard to imagine a greater contrast than that which the characters of the two elder daughters of Mr. Warrington then presented ; and yet, strange to say, this difference had not shown itself in childhood, when both alike were strong, lively, and engaging little girls, equally ready to please and to be pleased : nor had it been generally observed till within the last few months, when both had been regularly established at home as young ladies who had finished their education.

Sophia had, in fact, been at home much longer ; as she, being one year older than her sister, had left school before her ; and almost from the time of her return a change, which could not be said to be for the better, had seemed to come over her, until by

degrees the attractive buoyancy of her spirits, and the animated interest which she had once taken in life, seemed to have entirely left her.

It is not surprising, therefore, that to Florence, who retained every atom of her old spirit, and whose childish vivacity was not a whit lessened, though her life was daily becoming one of more fixed and earnest purpose, Sophia was rapidly growing to be less and less of a companion, and more and more of a puzzle; while that strong sympathy which had once bound the two girls together had almost entirely disappeared.

Why it was, or how it was, that the elder had thus sunk into a nervous, listless, and purposeless young woman, and whether the causes of the alteration were physical, moral, or mental, I am not going to attempt to decide. A very simple circumstance, and one of everyday occurrence, though one which has given the colour to many a young life, was the apparent cause of the very different form in which the character of the younger was rapidly moulding. It was simply this.

Just one month before Florence left Mrs. Bridger's school, a pretty little white house, which had long stood empty at the corner of the village, was taken by a particularly pleasant-looking, active, and neat little lady, rather past the middle age of life. She had come without any apparent attraction to the place; but she soon attracted many hearts to her, and among others that of Florence Warrington, who not only began to find her greatest pleasure in Miss Warner's society, but also rapidly grew to be her chief helper in those many interesting occupations in which she was speedily engaged.

To this friend she now soon made her escape, feeling assured that she alone would be able to understand why what was causing

so much pleasure to the others was to her one of the bitterest disappointments that could have befallen her.

‘When I had just found out that I *had* a work to do, and when I had begun to feel that I could be of some little use, to have to give it all up for such a time,—it does seem so hard, dear Miss Warner!’ she exclaimed, after explaining the circumstances. ‘A year ago I should have felt so differently; but now I hate the very thought of it. Oh, I would give anything to stay behind!’

‘Well,’ returned the good lady, smiling at her eagerness, ‘I am sure I should be very glad to keep you. Suppose you come and stay with me.’

‘If I only might!’ again exclaimed Florence. ‘Oh, would you mind asking for me?’

‘What, and deprive you of such a great advantage? I wonder what your father would think of me!’

‘If he only could know all that you have shown to me—all that there is to be done in this place, which *we* ought to have done, or at least been doing, all these years,’ replied Florence, earnestly, ‘I don’t think he would mind; indeed, I should think that he would rather be glad to have *one* left to be doing even a little of it. Oh, how often lately I have wished that he *did* know! for he is so kind-hearted that I am sure that would be quite enough—and then I doubt even whether he could go at all.’

‘Nay,’ interrupted Miss Warner, ‘his daughter’s health ought to come before his tenants’ welfare; and, besides, I quite see with him that it will be much better for your eldest brother.’

‘Miss Warner,’ said Florence, abruptly, ‘do *you* think that Sophia is seriously out of health?’

‘Really, my dear, that is a question which I am not in a position to answer. I know so very little of her, you know.’

‘Well,’ returned Florence, ‘I never ventured to hint at such a thing at home ; but I cannot help thinking, that if she only had something to do she would be as well as she used to be at school. We never heard anything about her nervousness and want of spirits there.’

‘Perhaps she overworked herself, and is paying for it now,’ replied her friend.

‘Oh dear, no ! Of course she was tired sometimes, just as you and I are, and as every one must be who does anything like work ; but that is very different from breaking down, you know : and besides, Sophia was quite well until she had been at home some time, though she soon got low-spirited.’

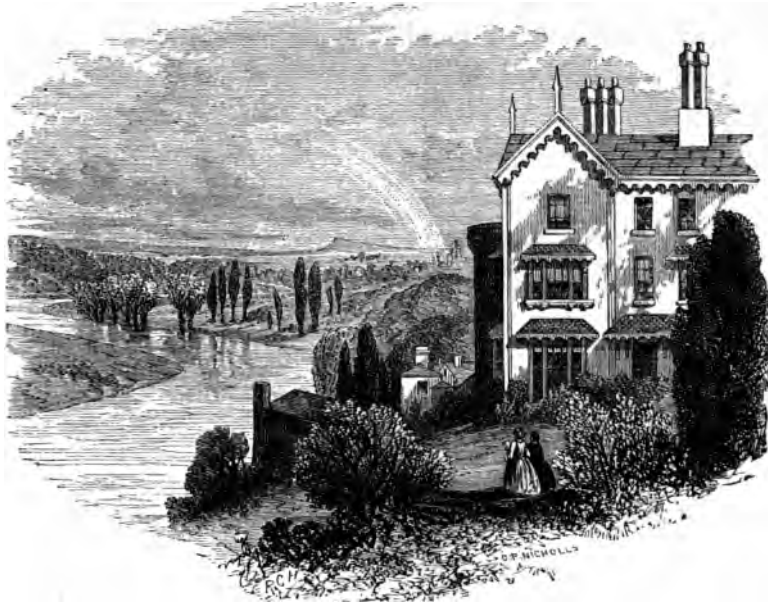
‘At any rate, if I were you I would not set this down in your mind as a settled point, dear, though I think it probable that you may not be far from the truth ; because, if time should prove the existence of serious disease, you would reproach yourself.’

‘And what if travelling for pleasure should have the effect of producing in me what it is to cure in Sophia ?’ returned Florence, whose face, just then, certainly wore an expression that more nearly resembled her sister’s than Miss Warner had ever before seen on it. ‘It seems to me not at all unlikely ! A whole year spent in amusing one’s self ! Just imagine !’

‘I can’t imagine such a thing for any Christian, dear,’ answered Miss Warner. ‘Will no one come in your way in all that time who will furnish work, think you ? And, above all, is there no labour of ministering love to be done in your own family ?’

‘Ah,’ said Florence, quickly, ‘it is so little that I can do at home ; they all call me an enthusiast there, and a matter-of-fact person, and all sorts of things : but among the poor I seem to be able really to do some good.’

‘ And so, perhaps, you are in danger of loving the work for its own sake—making an idol of it, in fact, and forgetting to do it as Christ’s servant and for His sake. May not this be the reason why He changes your work for a little while ?’ said Miss Warner.



It was a thought which had not occurred to Florence, and though at the moment of vexation not appreciated, yet it had its weight ; and when on her entrance into the house she found Maxwell just returned from town and the whole family warmly discussing arrangements, she made a strong effort to throw off every sign of discontent and to take her part with as much interest as possible. It was fortunate that Mr. Warrington had his own ideas on the subject, and that he had already sketched something

like a plan, otherwise the year might have passed before any conclusion was arrived at.

Annie, for instance, who happened to have been reading some books of Northern travels, thought that no countries could be so interesting as Norway or Iceland,—‘such intelligent people those Icelanders were,’ she said; while Martin would hear of no country but such as was classic ground, and declared that it would be a shame if they came back without seeing Greece and Rome.

This, however, being the first occasion of his showing any classical tastes, his voice was soon drowned in the storm of banter which he had drawn on himself.

Florence, when asked, gave her voice for Switzerland or the South of France, though at the same time she expressed herself as so willing to do just as the others wished, that her father quizzically remarked to her aside, that he ‘verily believed the steeple of Sunnington Church to have greater attractions for her than all the fine buildings in the world; and as to the schools, why he knew that they quite out-did, in her opinion, everything of that sort that could be seen abroad:’ which remark being overheard by Maxwell was immediately taken up by him, and Florence in her turn had enough to do to defend herself from the good-humoured raillery which beset her on all sides. It *was* perfectly good-humoured though, for, with all her so-called peculiarities, she was a great favourite at home.

As soon as this little interlude had come to an end Sophia and Maxwell were called on for their votes, which were declared to be the most important of all, as they were the persons chiefly concerned; and then a good deal of discussion ensued: but Venice was one point of interest happily agreed on by both; at which Mr. Warrington expressed himself pleased, as he said it had

formed part of his own plan ; though how to arrive at Venice was another question, that being a place that could not be visited in summer, and this being only the 12th of May.

‘What do you say to a fortnight at Paris, as the first step?’ asked Mrs. Warrington, after a pause ; but that suggestion was immediately quashed by a united protest against wasting time at a place where they had been twice before.

‘I was thinking now of Strasburg, mother,’ said Maxwell : ‘we have a cousin there, you know.’

‘What! young Walter Lucan, you mean?’ she answered, colouring slightly, and with a little toss of her head. ‘Well, I don’t know whether that would be much recommendation to the place. We have no such great desire to cultivate an intimacy with that family ; at least *I* have not, for my part.’

‘As to his family,’ returned the young man—who seemed not a little annoyed by his mother’s remark—‘there are none of them out there with him, that I am aware of ; and a Professor in the University of Strasburg is not a person of whom one need feel particularly ashamed, I should say.’

‘Maxwell has his own ideas of rank and dignity, you see, my dear,’ interposed his father, laughing. ‘There are more kinds of pride in the world than one. But you know something of him personally, Max, don’t you? and that’s more to the point. If he is an agreeable and intelligent fellow, why, it is all that we need trouble our heads about, so far away from home ; and we might find him very handy.’

Mrs. Warrington made no reply, except by carrying her eyes towards her daughters, and then back, significantly, to her husband. He, however, did not observe the movement, being already engaged in listening to his son’s report of the young Professor.

This being particularly favourable, and other considerations with regard to the position of the town as a good starting-point, either for Germany, Switzerland, or Italy, being duly weighed, the mother waived her objection ; and it was pretty well agreed that Strasburg should be first honoured with a visit, and that from thence they should proceed successively to several of the most interesting of the German cities, before settling down for some part of the winter at Venice. What should be done after that was left entirely for future consideration.

As soon as this point was so settled there came a little pause ; and most of the party began to turn their eyes silently first round the room, and then out on to the pretty pleasure-grounds which surrounded the house ; at length Mr. Warrington said :—

‘ Then, I suppose, we have only now to choose whether we leave this place empty, or find a tenant for it. What do you say, mamma ?’

Mrs. Warrington did not know. Regretfully she thought of all her own tasteful arrangements, and of the care which had always been bestowed on her house. She thought, too, of her well-ordered and respectable establishment of servants, and certainly experienced a strong feeling of regret at parting with them, which seemed to be necessary in either case, so that it appeared only to be a choice of evils.

But a bright idea had struck Florence, and she saw that this was the moment to suggest it.

‘ Mamma,’ she said, ‘ I suppose you have heard how delicate Aunt Greville and Susie have been lately, and that uncle has been obliged to give up his house in London because they cannot live there. What do you think . . .’

‘ A capital plan, Florence !’ exclaimed her father. ‘ We may as well ask them all just to come and take possession at once.

Strange though that you should hit on them ; for I had been wondering how Martin might fancy carrying Newton Greville along with him ; they're about of an age.'

'Magnificent! splendiferous! jolly! jolly! jolly!' answered Martin. 'That will be glorious! Shall I write and ask him to get ready to-night?'

'You may write, if you like ; but I scarcely think that either he or I can be ready quite so soon,' replied his father quietly.

'Oh, papa! now you know what I mean,' said the boisterous young gentleman, skirmishing about for some pens and paper,— 'and shall I say anything about the others?'

'No,' replied his mother, laughing, 'you needn't trouble yourself to do that ; I will write to your aunt myself, and by this post too, if papa likes. It may not be in time, otherwise, to prevent them from making some other arrangements. I am sure, Florence dear, I am much obliged for your suggestion, for you have taken a great load from my mind.'

Florence was glad of that, and said so ; but she did not say how glad she was for other reasons, too : nor what hopes she built on this proposed residence of the Greville family at Sunnington.

CHAPTER II.

It was during a short excursion to Paris, three years before the date of the conversation just related, that Maxwell Warrington had first made the acquaintance of Walter Lucan ; whose father, a cousin of Mrs. Warrington's, had offended the greater portion of his family by presuming to marry a young French lady, who was not only penniless, but, as they considered, of a rank in society below that to which he was born.

Being, however, in his own opinion, particularly happy in his choice, Mr. Lucan had troubled himself very little about that of uncles and cousins ; he had settled down at a distance from those who considered themselves so much aggrieved as not to desire his society, and brought up his family amongst a circle of friends of his own choosing : and though his own property was but small, yet as he held a good appointment under Government they had lived during his lifetime in great comfort, though not in the affluence to which most of his relations were accustomed. But at his death, which happened when his eldest son Walter was still little more than a boy, things were of course painfully changed ; and after trying various plans, in the hope of carrying out her husband's great wish,—that his children should be educated and settled in his native land,—the poor widow found herself at length compelled to abandon the idea, and to return with her seven orphans to Stras-

burg, where her own friends were better able to assist and befriend her, and where she could herself hope to secure for them educational advantages which in England would have been out of the question.

Keeping, however, the same point always in view, she had, as her boys got old enough to make their own way in life, steadily sought for them English appointments in preference to French ones ; and recently, on the marriage of her eldest daughter to the curate of



a Yorkshire parish, she had herself returned to settle near her with her two youngest girls, leaving Walter alone behind in France.

He, having no taste either for the army, navy, or merchant's counting-house, had within the last few months been constrained to accept a Professorship in the University in which he had been brought up, and in which he had considerably distinguished himself ; and was thus, for the present, the single Frenchman of his family.

And yet, of all the sons, none, perhaps, was so thoroughly English in all his tastes, or more completely entered into his father's desire that he should inherit all the privileges of our favoured land. Walter was ambitious, too, in his way, and had not unfrequently indulged in flights of fancy about making a figure in the country where he first drew breath; yet being, with all this, a practical person, these day-dreams were uniformly choked in the steady toil of his laborious life, and left behind them scarcely any other effects than a lurking feeling of bitterness, of which he was scarcely conscious, against those of his own flesh and blood, who might so easily have stretched out a helping hand to place within his reach all that he wished, and all that his father had wished for him.

It will not, therefore, be supposed that, knowing full well, as he did, how Mrs. Warrington—who in early youth had been almost on sisterly terms with his father—had even distinguished herself by the bitterness which she had displayed on the occasion of his marriage, and how she had since shunned his family, that the intelligence of this proposed visit of his relations should afford him much pleasure, even though conveyed by the cordial pen of one whom he knew to be free from any feeling of the kind.

It required, indeed, but small skill on the part of the young French maid, who waited on him at his solitary breakfast, to divine that 'something was amiss with Monsieur le Professeur, and that his little letter had not given him an appetite.'

The hot blood mounted to his forehead as he read, that before six o'clock on that very evening Maxwell 'hoped for the pleasure of introducing his mother and sisters,' and pictured to himself the distant bows of his stately cousins—to be returned, of course, by one more distant still, and yet more freezing. Imaginary conversations

next followed in quick succession; in which also, of course, he was always his own hero, 'standing up for the fatherless and the oppressed,' and earnestly engaged in fighting the battles of his departed father, and of his 'gentle, patient, unselfish, and ladylike mother.'

Perhaps it was a good thing that this day happened to be a busy one, and that some little piece of literary success, and the consequent flattering attention of one of their leading men, put him on such good terms with himself that he felt almost up to encountering anything.

Certainly it was a good thing that something, which was deeply rooted in the young Professor's heart, made its voice to be so far heard that, ere the afternoon came, he had resolved for his part to show no unkind feeling, and to give no ground for complaint either of ungentlemanly conduct, or, if he could help it, even of the want of as cordial a reception as a cousin in his own city might be expected to give; though he still held to his original plan of being 'rather stiff at first.' 'We expect to be a little tired when we arrive, so perhaps you will kindly make sure of a private conveyance for the ladies; and if there be any chance of the best hotel being full, bespeak accommodation for a large party,' Maxwell had said; and having attended to both these requests, Walter Lucan made his way to the railway station, where he found himself a few minutes before the train was due, and there unexpectedly met an old friend, with whom he was speedily engaged in such deep converse that Maxwell's voice from the carriage was the first thing that announced its arrival.

'Here you are, my good fellow!' he exclaimed, jumping out on to the platform almost before the train had stopped; 'and badly enough we want you; for my eldest sister, who has been

half fainting for the last two hours with the intense heat inside that furnace of a carriage, has just gone right off, and we want to know where to find a cool spot for her, and how, for love or money, to get a glass of cold water to throw over her.'

Woe to Walter's dignity now! It was all gone in a minute, and he was flying hither and thither, making himself so useful, and showing so much of his own warm-hearted, impulsive nature, that Mrs. Warrington, in her anxiety and gratitude, forgot quite as much as he did to be stiff and cold. So much so, indeed, that when the young lady was brought round again, and the carriage was on the point of driving off to the Hôtel de Paris, the invitation which was pressed on him to follow with the gentlemen, who were walking, and join them at the private dinner which would be awaiting them, was perfectly irresistible; so that in another hour the whole party were seated at table and chatting away with as much cordiality as if nothing unpleasant had ever occurred, and with as much animation as railway headaches would allow.

The travellers were, however, so evidently thoroughly tired out, and the ladies especially so unfit for anything but rest, that he left immediately afterwards, with a promise to return next morning to take them about 'lionizing,' and saying that he had a good deal of leisure just then, which he should be happy to devote to their service.

'An offer which we shall gratefully accept,' said Mr. Warrington, as he accompanied the young man to the door; and so they parted with a truly English shake of the hands.

Things did not look altogether promising next morning, as regarded the prospects of the travellers; for Sophia was not well enough to appear at breakfast at all; Mr. Warrington came down late with a bad cold; and Mrs. Warrington, of whose appearance

the juveniles had begun altogether to despair, when she did come down, was suffering from headache even more than on the previous evening. So that, had it not been for the buoyant hopefulness of Florence's spirits, and the present prospect which he had of an agreeable companion in his cousin, Maxwell would almost have repented that he had ever bound himself to travel with a family.

Annie and the two boys had risen perfectly rested, and had appeared in the sitting-room at an early hour; and when they had at last satisfied their famishing appetites, their impatience 'to get out and do something' would scarcely allow them either to wait until their brother and sister had finished their letters, or for the arrival of their cousinly guide.

The presence of Martin in a room with three ailing persons, in his then excited state of mind, was certainly not desirable; so it was a relief to every one when they heard his exclamation of 'Here comes the learned Professor at last, I declare! Well, he's had a good night's rest at any rate, if he's only just up.'

'Be off downstairs then, and tell him so,' said Maxwell, getting up and whisking him out of the room; 'and say at the same time that we sent you off out of sick people's way to get a lesson on the art of travelling scientifically, and that we'll be after you ourselves in a minute, when we mean to do our very best to knock you up this time, that we may have a quiet evening.'

Newton and Annie were hardly an instant in following Martin, the former only stopping to make sure of his little note-book, and the latter of the basket which she had provided for the curiosities, supposed by people of her age to be always at hand in strange places. And as soon as Maxwell and Florence had fastened up their letters, and had received their directions about hours, the whole party were ready to start; and a merry one they soon

became, especially the juvenile trio behind, whose noisy mirth was a clear sign that travelling was something new to them

Florence had several times heard her brother speak in warm terms of this cousin, and since it had been decided for them to come to Strasburg he had told her much of the history of his family and their sorrows; but she soon perceived that all her inquiries after his mother and sister were received with shyness, and regarded as merely formal questions.

Maxwell evidently saw this, too, and, changing the subject, began to speak of so many things which seemed to have an equal interest for both that Florence could not but wonder at such an intimacy having for so long subsisted, without either herself or any of her family being aware of it. Indeed they soon got into such earnest conversation, that they appeared to have forgotten that the object of the walk was the exercise of their eyes rather than of their tongues; but an impatient exclamation from Newton Greville at length brought Walter Lucan to a recollection of what he owed to those behind.

Now Newton had struck him at first as a lad of unusual taste and genius, and he had taken a far greater fancy to him than to his own young cousin Martin, in whom he saw nothing more than an ordinary, noisy, good-tempered young fellow; so when he overheard his unintentionally loud and impatient 'How provoking it is that, after all, we can't find out anything about a single thing that we are passing!' he instantly stepped back, saying,—

'Perhaps we might, if we were to try; only I thought you might like to take a look round you first, you see, and didn't know that you were in such a hurry to "do the town." What is it that you wish to know?'

‘All sorts of things,’ answered Newton, quickly. ‘The name of this river first, please, and the ages of those grand old houses. What splendid old places they are!’

‘You are an admirer of old things, are you?’ returned Walter; ‘and possibly would like to return to many of the old customs, and live as they used to do some hundreds of years ago?’

‘In some things I should, decidedly; and I am sure the houses were much better in those days.’

‘Yes,’ interrupted Martin, laughing heartily; ‘he likes those dear old places that we just passed with four stories up in the roof, and nobody knows how many chimneys puffing their smoke right in at the windows; and he’s going to build one just like them one of these days, with a fine little garret up in the very top, on purpose for me when I go to see him, where I may grow as studious as he wants me to be.’

‘Well,’ remarked the young Professor, joining in the laugh, ‘we can show you plenty of old things here; for the town was built before the Christian era.’

‘And the river?’ asked Newton: ‘you didn’t tell us its name.’

‘River! This is no river. It is one of our grand canals. We have three, you know; and it was these that, by uniting us to the great rivers of France and Germany, and so putting us, as it were, on the high road of Europe, made us of so much consequence even before railways were dreamt of.’

‘But you have a river here?’ interrupted Florence.

‘Yes; the little river Ill: a branch of the Rhine.’

‘Only a branch!’ repeated Annie, in a very disappointed tone of voice; ‘I thought you were *on* the Rhine itself.’

‘Not quite; but it is only a nice walk to it. We will cross

some day and see what there is on the other side, if you like. Then we shall be in Germany.'



'Oh, Martin!' cried Annie, seizing his arm, 'what are those immense birds perched up there on the roof of that house, all in

a row? They look exactly like storks, only the sun is so in my eyes that I can't see plainly.'

'Storks!' repeated Martin, contemptuously, and he looked about to see what had attracted her attention. 'Who ever heard of such a thing?'

'I have, for one,' answered Mr. Lucan, quickly. 'Your sister is quite right. Look at the old fellows quietly making their toilets up there. They come to us every spring, and go away in the autumn, returning next year in just the same numbers as before; so I suppose they reckon how many our town will support, and send off some of the young ones elsewhere. They'll come down to be fed by-and-bye, and you may go and feed them if you will: only mind, we Strasburghers consider them under our protection, and don't allow any tricks.'

'I saw something else that looked very queer just now,' interrupted Martin. 'A goose down in the cellar of a house, in a very narrow coop, and so fat that he couldn't turn round! Is that how you serve the geese under your protection?'

'Yes, that's the way,' replied his cousin; 'and stuff them besides with a paste made of maize till their livers grow to an enormous size.'

'What ever for?'

'Come to my rooms some day, and have a taste of "pâté de foie gras," and then you'll see.'

The young folks laughed, and exclaimed 'What a queer idea!' And then they asked what there was to be seen on the other side of the Rhine.

'We shall cross the bridge of boats,' said Lucan, 'and then we come to the town of Kehl, which is just opposite to us, where General Desaix is buried. Now, who knows the history of General Desaix?'

‘I don’t, I’m sure,’ answered Martin with a yawn: ‘but I suppose you do, Newton.’

‘Wasn’t he one of Buonaparte’s generals?’ asked the latter, after a minute’s pause.

‘Yes: after the seige of Kehl he joined him at Milan and went to Egypt with him; then he was taken prisoner by the English, but eventually got back to Napoleon and died at the battle of Marengo. First of all, though, he had made his reputation here by the exhibition of a virtue in which my cousin Martin excels us all. I mean at the defence of Kehl, which he patiently held against a strong force of Austrians for two months.’

‘Was it fortified?’ asked Newton, now quite in his element.

‘Yes; it had been fortified by a famous engineer named Vauban, who lived in the reign of Louis the Fourteenth; that is, in the seventeenth century, when there were so many great men.’

‘And so many *bad* ones,’ interposed Florence.

‘That’s right!’ cried Maxwell. ‘Ah! I forgot to tell Walter what a straitlaced person this sister of mine is; she’ll have a lot of questions of her own to propose to you one of these days, Walter: see if she hasn’t.’

Florence coloured, for, though the remark was made thoughtlessly, she felt annoyed by it, and as soon as their cousin left them to attend to his own duties she made a point of bestowing a small scolding on the mischievous brother, who ‘was always making her out a perfect oddity before every one.’

He answered carelessly that it was ‘no matter in this case, as Walter was nearly as peculiar himself;’ but scarcely had the words escaped him than he seemed to recollect himself, and after casting one scrutinising glance on her he became absent for the rest of the walk. On their return to the hôtel they found Sophia better,

and engaged with considerable interest in making a drawing from the window. Her mother was also somewhat more comfortable ; but Mr. Warrington seemed in bad spirits, and likely to be laid up with a peculiar attack to which he was subject.

The three young people, who had all come back in a very eager and excited mood, immediately set to work to arrange their own particular plans :—Annie and Newton, who had already discovered in each other a great similarity of tastes, sitting down in hot haste to lay the plan of a journal which they were to keep conjointly during the whole of their tour ; while Martin picked up an old guide-book, and was soon deeply interested in the account of the ascent of the spire of the Cathedral, which he hoped to make next day.

They all joined the table d'hôte at dinner, and found the entertainment excellent. But as what they heard there about what was worth seeing and what was not, rather perplexed them than otherwise, they were all glad to see Walter Lucan in the evening, when he dropped in to inquire after the invalids ; and Mr. Warrington, who kept him chatting for some time, was much impressed in his favour. Sophia also was gratified with the critical manner in which he examined her sketch, and by his admiration of her work ; while Newton had such a number of questions to ask, and found so many points on which to consult him, that it was late before he got away. Maxwell, notwithstanding, went out with him, and was absent for at least an hour, taking, as most of the party thought, a pleasant moonlight stroll. But Florence knew better, having happened to go to the window for something a few minutes after they left the room, when, raising the blind for a moment, she perceived the two friends pacing up and down on the opposite side of the canal, in earnest conversation. And when her brother did return, remarking that

his cousin had forgotten to say that, if all were well, he hoped to meet them in front of the Cathedral just before twelve next day, she noticed that he spoke as if thinking of something else, took up a book, and throwing himself on a chair, was soon in a deep reverie, of which, as his eyes were from time to time fixed on her, she could not but feel curious to know the subject.

The whole party, with the exception of Mr. Warrington, were at the rendezvous punctually next day; and the two boys were engaged in a hot dispute regarding the height of that most wonderful spire when Mr. Lucan joined them. He soon decided in favour of Newton, who had maintained that, being, as the guide-book stated, 468 feet from the pavement, it exceeded the height of St. Paul's by 64 feet, and the Great Pyramid of Egypt by 24; when Martin bluffly protested that 'never again would he pretend to remember figures, or set himself up for a scholar like Newton, for his head wouldn't hold a single fact, so it was no use putting them into a thing with holes.'

Nothing, however, ever put Martin out of temper; and in the fun of watching the extraordinary performances of that wonderful clock everything else was soon forgotten.

Just on the stroke of twelve, every day, all the puppets and images connected with it are set in motion, and of the beginning of the performance notice is given by the figure of a cock on the top, which gets up on its legs and gives a loud crow.

When this was over, their cousin explained how it points out not only the hour, but the day of the week, month, and even the year, and afterwards drew their attention to a figure of the architect of the Minster, Erwin of Steinbach, who died in A.D. 1318, when it was only half finished, leaving his son and daughter to complete his work.



‘His daughter?’ exclaimed Annie. ‘I never heard of a lady building a church!’

‘Haven’t you?’ replied her cousin. ‘Well, I have; though it was not quite like this one, being only intended for the Hottentots amongst whom she lived. I think, however, that Miss Sabina’s work here does her credit. Look at all these ornaments on the south door, and say if they are not beautiful.’

‘I say, look at Annie’s eyes!’ shouted Martin; ‘she’ll set us all on fire with them. Enthusiastic in a small degree, isn’t she?’ he added, making the most ridiculous grimaces. ‘Now, I’ll tell you what it is: you’ve just hit the very point where her genius lies, Mr. Professor; and from this day forward you’ll see the architectural talent gradually developing itself. Take my word for it!’

‘I wish we could hit the point where *your* genius lies,’ interposed Maxwell: ‘that would be more to the point a good deal. There,’ he added, pushing him out of Annie’s way, ‘get along with you, do; I want to be mounting up that spire.’

‘You can’t to-day though, indeed,’ replied Lucan, interrupting the two boys’ boisterous assents to this proposition; ‘we must have an order from the mayor to do that.’

‘An order from the mayor! Why, is it so dangerous?’

‘People have been known to tumble off before now, and some to throw themselves down,’ he answered. ‘You want a good deal of nerve and a very steady head to do it safely, for the stonework at the top is all completely open. It is said that three females have at different times been so completely overpowered by the giddy height, that they have lost their senses, and, in a moment of delirium, flung themselves down, and been dashed to pieces. One of these accidents happened about thirty or forty years ago, and I

have seen the man who witnessed it. It was quite a young girl, and the first sign of her senses giving way was excessive mirth. She laughed and shouted, as if in an ecstasy, as she went up ; and when she got to a point where nothing intercepted her view of the abyss below, she sprang off, screaming wildly as she fell,—“such a cry it was,” he said ; “too terrible even to think of!”

‘Horrible!’ exclaimed all the ladies at once, and Mrs. Warrington added,—‘We shall none of us think of making the ascent, if you gentlemen do ; which I hope you will not.’

‘We can’t to-day, mother,’ returned Maxwell, laughing ; but his cousin added,—

‘You may go up the tower though, if you will, and from the platform at the top you will get a very good view of the Rhine country, the Black Forest, and the Vosges mountains ; and you can have a chat with the two men who live up there to give notice of fires.’

‘What an extraordinary arrangement!’ answered Maxwell, laughing. ‘Are you so liable to fires in this part of the world that you must be always thinking about them?’

‘We are so very prudent, you see, that’s the fact,’ answered Lucan. ‘Haven’t you noticed how they ring this great bell every quarter of an hour, night and day?’

‘Yes, I did, and thought it a great bore.’

‘Bore or no bore,’ said Lucan, ‘these fellows are obliged to do it, to let us know that they are wide awake. How would you like to be in their place about four o’clock on a January morning?’

They went over the church and up the tower, leaving Sophia only below ; and then, to Florence’s joy, Walter Lucan took on himself to conduct both her mother and sister back to the hotel,

leaving her to walk alone with her brother. Maxwell's manner all that morning had been very abstracted, and quite unlike himself; so that it had confirmed her impression of the previous night, that some subject of a more interesting nature than appeared was engrossing the attention of both himself and his cousin: nor could she help hoping that in this case, as had sometimes been his custom, Maxwell might be disposed to make a *confidante* of her. And she was not disappointed,—though, for want of space, I must postpone letting the reader into the secret until the next chapter, only mentioning here, that so interested was she in what he had to tell, that neither the statue of John Guttenberg—whose earliest attempt at printing was made in Strasburg—nor the story of the Brand Gasse, or Rue Brûlé, where 2000 Jews, accused of poisoning the city wells, were burnt some five hundred years ago, which story Annie came back to relate,—had much power to arrest her attention.

CHAPTER III.

It was nearly breakfast time, about a fortnight after the visit to the cathedral, and Florence sat alone at the window watching the peasants as they passed along to the market, admiring their curious Alsatian costume, listening to their lively German talk, and wondering at their lateness in beginning the work of the day. She had not been down so early before during her stay in Strasburg, and had not, therefore, been aware how sleepy the whole town is, even at seven o'clock in the morning ; though, as she knew well how early in the evening the beer-shops were opened, and how thoroughly German the place still is in its taste for beer and tobacco, notwithstanding that it has been under French rule ever since the time of Louis the Fourteenth, she was at no loss to account for the circumstance.

A little sketch of one of these peasant-girls in her skirt and short jacket, coming only to the waist, with the three-cornered handkerchief put on shawl-wise over it ; her curious skull-cap head-dress, with the enormous bow just over her forehead, looking as if a crow with its wings spread had settled there ; and her high shoes, with their large buckles on the instep, lay before her. It was the product of Annie's pencil ; and she had asked Florence to make sure that she had the dress right, that she might not be kept in from her early walk. So now, having finished a letter to Susie

Greville, she sat looking over it, and waiting for the others to come in to breakfast.

But Florence did not expect to awake another morning in Strasburg, as it had been arranged that the family should leave that day for Stuttgart; and with her stay in the kingdom of Wirtemberg other thoughts, besides those of seeing a new place, were mingled.

Something had already been found for her to do, and when she remembered Miss Warner's remark, and thought how little she could have anticipated for her work of the kind now set before her, she could not help smiling.

Newton was the first to break her reverie. He had come on, as he said, before the others to pack up his treasures; that is, the little presents for mother and sisters bought in the town, the engravings, sketches, note-book, and various other such little matters, about which he was always so particular that he subjected himself to plenty of Martin's teasing. But the others, he told her, 'were still on the river's bank watching one of the old Rhine rafts, and gathering flowers enough to fill the room, because they were too pretty to be left in peace, and intended, as he supposed, as a legacy for Mr. Lucan.'

Sophia next appeared, at so unusually early an hour for her as to surprise them both, and down she sat immediately to help Newton, for whom she had a very kindly feeling, because he had been very thoughtful for her sometimes, when she had not felt well, besides being fond herself of such little jobs.

So Florence thought she might as well put up Annie's treasures at the same time; and while they were all three thus busily occupied, and Newton was amusing them with an account of his visit to Mulhausen in company with Mr. Lucan, 'his friend the

Professor,' as he had taken to call him, and was relating how nearly all those beautiful French printed cottons, which are the admiration of Europe, are made there, and also what pains are taken with the work-people, and how happy and comfortable they all are, the two young men came in.

They seemed to have business in hand, and looked vexed at



finding any one there but Florence. And Maxwell, coming close to her, whispered,—

‘Whatever made Sophia come down so early? Walter has something particular to say to you.’

‘He must say it then through you,’ she answered, quickly. ‘I shall not be alone again before we leave.’

Her brother turned to his cousin, and said,—

‘How I wish you were going with us, Walter!’

‘I shouldn’t have any objection,’ was his answer, ‘for I have never been into Wirtemberg, though I hope to have business there one of these days; but it can’t be for the next two months at least. I am tied here, you see: and there’s no knowing where you may be by that time.’

‘Somewhere in Germany, that’s pretty certain,’ rejoined Sophia; ‘for we can’t get on to Venice before the winter.’

‘So if it had not been for my mother’s great anxiety to see her old friend, the German Countess, we might, you see, have bored you yet a little longer,’ remarked Maxwell, looking quizzically at his cousin, and then at Florence. ‘Ah, wouldn’t you have been glad if we had, now? It would have given you an opportunity of bringing Master Newton on finely in his researches—making almost a Sir Isaac of him!’

‘Yes,’ answered Walter, who was walking about the room in a restless way, and now again turned to look out of the window: ‘it was very shabby of you all to run away so soon.’ But he did not speak very heartily, and Maxwell, looking up mischievously from an examination of some performance of Newton’s, remarked quietly,—

‘Oh, he’s so sorry that we are going so soon!’

Walter had to lecture immediately after breakfast; but he had been invited to join them at this last meal. Two hours afterwards the omnibuses would be starting for the railway station, and, as he said, it would be uncertain whether he could do himself the pleasure of seeing them off.

When the time came there were many passengers, and some little dilatoriness on the part of Mrs. Warrington’s maid caused the ladies to be just too late to secure sufficient seats in the conveyance.

‘ Here, Florence,’ cried Maxwell, ‘ you and I will travel together then for once ; I’m sick of boys’ company. Come along !’ And as he handed her in they saw Walter hurriedly cross the road, and go first to the other omnibus, to say how glad he was to have the chance of bidding them good-bye again, and to express the hope that at some future time he should have the pleasure of welcoming them once more to Strasburg. When he came on to theirs, Maxwell, who was waiting at the door to give him a last shake of the hand, said in a low tone, but one which Florence could hear,—‘ Now, Walter, you see you have the chance of telling my sister personally how deep will be your mother’s gratitude should she succeed in her efforts.’

‘ Indeed—I—I would have also expressed . . . could I have had . . . ’ stammered the young man ; ‘ but . . . ’

At this moment the conductor slammed the door, the coachman gave the word to his horses, and Maxwell was obliged to take his seat, shouting as he did so to his cousin,—‘ Keep up your spirits, my dear fellow ; we’ll have a jolly meeting one of these days.’

Now the plan of our travellers was not to go by rail and round by Carlsruhe, but only to take the train from Kehl to Appenweir, and thence to obtain a conveyance and post-horses on to Freudenstadt, stopping at every place of interest on the way ; and they expected to find many such at Freudenstadt, which is in itself a place of considerable interest, having been founded in the fourteenth century by a Duke of Wirtemberg as a place of refuge for persecuted Protestants driven out of their homes in Styria and Carinthia : they were to rest some time, and then obtain fresh horses and proceed through the Black Forest to Stuttgart.

But whilst they are on their journey it will be a good oppor-

tunity for me to stop and make the reader a little acquainted with the subject at which I have hinted as occupying the minds of two of the party. Maxwell, as I have stated, had first met his cousin some three years before; and on that occasion he had become accidentally aware of a fact of particular interest to Mr. Lucan, and the very discovery of which by Maxwell almost necessitated a kind of intimacy, which, in spite of the mutual liking they had for one another, might not have otherwise existed between them.

It was as follows:—

Mrs. Lucan had had for some months under her care a young English lady, who, having neither father nor mother, had been living in the heart of one of our manufacturing cities with an aunt and uncle, who, though they meant kindly enough, took no particular interest in her, and not being used to young people, had never discovered how far her desolate position had preyed on her mind and injured her health, until that had become very seriously affected. The constant remarks of their friends on poor Constance's pale cheeks at last made them uneasy, and not knowing what else to do, they gladly caught at the suggestion of a lady who had known Mrs. Lucan during her residence in England, and sent the young lady to stay with her, feeling quite relieved to be rid of the charge of so delicate a girl.

There, in the fresh country air, and under the good widow's maternal care, her health speedily began to recover; and she was in no haste to return to her cold English home, notwithstanding the contrast between the luxury which there reigned and the frugal simplicity of Mrs. Lucan's house.

The possibility of that future for her was, however, at length prevented, by the deaths of both her relatives shortly before the

time which had been fixed for her to go back ; and she then unexpectedly found herself left with so small an income as to oblige her to think of adding to it by her own exertions ; and also by her uncle's will she understood that she was placed, during her minority, under the guardianship of a perfect stranger to her, who, as she soon discovered, was by no means content to leave her where she was, nor even to consult her own feelings as to her future life.

She had become tenderly attached to Mrs. Lucan, whose gentle, pious character, had exercised a most beneficial influence over her ; and that good lady would gladly have arranged for her to remain under her roof as a daughter, and earn her living by any means within her power. But her new guardian was a man of very strong opinions, which were, unhappily, by no means in accordance with those of Mrs. Lucan. In fact, though not a Frenchman himself, he had been much mixed up with French society, and had a strong bias towards particular parties both in politics and religion.

And here I must explain, that though Strasburg is a town in which there are a large number of so-called Protestants, yet those bearing this name are by no means of one mind, nor do they all retain their belief in those doctrines which were so prominently brought forward at the time of the Reformation. Luther, Calvin, Zuingle, and others, would all alike be surprised were they now to rise up among the descendants of their old disciples and hear the sermons preached in their churches ; for though, happily, there are still many who do value their Bibles above any earthly treasure, and who simply believe what those Bibles teach, there are many others who deny them to be the revealed will of God, and who believe only what their reason approves. They do not

think themselves to be sinners, and, therefore, they do not value the Saviour whom God has in mercy given to poor lost creatures: in short, they make an idol of their reason, and are called Rationalists; and between them and the old Evangelical Christians there is no sympathy. In England, of course, we have people of the same kind; but then our English Church system does not throw the two kinds of people so much into contact. In France, the Protestants living among the Romanists are, of course, more a separate body; but there, one large church has often three or four ministers, all unconnected with one another, and now often holding very different opinions; and a very bitter and painful feeling often exists between the different congregations who attend the same church. So it was at Strasburg, as Mr. Norman well knew, being thoroughly acquainted with the town; and as he was a strong admirer of the Rationalist party, he immediately determined to ascertain to which Mrs. Lucan belonged. A short visit soon settled this point, and made it evident that there could be no sympathy between them; while it also showed him how fully Constance entered into her adopted mother's views and feelings. Besides this, as he said, she might do much better for herself by entering some school or family in Germany, where, by acquiring the language, she might be prepared to take a higher situation, and very soon told Mrs. Lucan that he felt it his duty to remove her.

The poor girl's entreaties were, therefore, disregarded; and in a few days she was obliged to bid farewell, not only to her dear Mrs. Lucan, but also to one whom she then, for the first time, discovered she loved better still.

Walter, indeed, had long been aware of his own deep attachment; but on account of his then almost dependent position he

had not spoken of it to her: nor did even his own mother then know the state of the case; and if his deep depression after the departure of Constance, which he could not altogether conceal, led her to suspect it, she never hinted at such a thing.

Only on the evening before the poor girl went away had Walter found an opportunity to obtain the promise which was the desire of his heart; and while he had scrupulously kept his secret, under the conviction that this was now his best policy, she had never had an opportunity of telling hers. Thus she left them.

At first, it had been known that she was placed in a school in a distant German town, where she received certain advantages in return for her instruction in the English language; then they heard that she had been settled in a family who were travelling in Prussia and in Norway; but the tone of the few letters which ever reached them plainly showed her dread of their being opened; and for a long time all communication had ceased, and they were left altogether in ignorance of her fate: so that the hope pointing to the time of her attaining her majority, which first supported her friends, had almost died out.

Now, how it was that a secret so carefully kept could ever have come to the knowledge of Maxwell Warrington is more than I can tell; all I can say is that he did know it, and that just before this visit to Strasburg a rumour, which appeared to be well founded, and which pointed to Stuttgardt or some neighbouring place as her present residence, had induced Walter again to open the subject to him; and Maxwell, as we shall find, had persuaded him now to admit his sister into the secret.

‘For two reasons I got him to do so, Florence,’ he said, as he concluded his narration, ‘though I only gave him one; which was that you, far better than either he or I, can look up this young

countrywoman of ours, and discover whether or no she is true to her old love. And if so, as she is now within a month or so of twenty-one, I will venture to say that you will be the means of making two people very happy.'

'And what was the other reason?' asked Florence.

'Oh, I leave you to guess that!' returned her brother, laughing.

'Perhaps you might feel offended if I mentioned it.'

'What *do* you mean, Maxwell?' returned Florence, colouring; but some interruption from the party in front prevented him from answering, and she did not pursue her inquiry.

We will now return to the travelling party, who have just got into the train,—Sophia and her sister seated opposite to each other—their father and mother being at the other end of the carriage—and their brothers and Newton between.

'I am afraid you will be rather knocked up, Sophy,' remarked Florence, after she had carefully settled her sister in the corner, and drawn the blind to shade her from the dust. 'It will be a long journey by this route; though, if you can bear it, much more interesting than if we were to go all the way by rail.'

'Oh, I don't think I shall be too tired,' she answered, cheerfully: 'travelling seems to suit me. I am not nearly so tired as I often was at home, without any exertion.'

'You wanted excitement, Sophy,' remarked Maxwell, gaping. 'Some people can't get on without it.'

'Florence finds excitement enough among the dirty children at Sunnington,' remarked Martin, giving her a poke. 'What a strange taste you must have, Flo, to take delight in so much dirt! But I've often noticed, that it seems to have a power of putting pink into your cheeks.'

'It isn't the dirt she takes pleasure in,' cried Newton, indig-

nantly ; 'it is, that she has a power of getting rid of it. Do you call a housemaid dirty because she finds a pleasure in scrubbing a floor?'

'Well done, Newton!' cried Maxwell, giving him an encouraging clap on the shoulder. 'I declare you're growing quite a philosopher!'

'No thanks to me, then,' returned Newton. 'It was my friend the Professor who taught me that lesson the other day, when we were at Mulhausen.'

'Did he really, though!' cried Martin. 'Well, I shouldn't have relished a lecture on philosophy when I was out for a day's pleasure.'

'I had no lecture; or if I had, a precious short one,' returned Newton, rather contemptuously.

'What did you have, then?' inquired Maxwell.

'A visit to the factories; a visit to a gentleman who pleases himself wonderfully in looking after the work-people; and, last of all, a visit to the cottages and gardens, which are given as rewards to those of them that have been steady for a good long time, or let very low to them—I don't know which.'

'And the short lecture?' asked Mr. Warrington, who had overheard the latter part of the conversation.

'Only something about the immense pleasure of a life spent in doing such a great work.'

'As what?' asked his uncle again.

'Trying to make so many people good and happy who are generally bad and miserable.'

'A hard task enough!' remarked his uncle, as if to himself.

'But one I should like,' returned the boy, earnestly.

'Was it that consideration that first set you to work, Florence?' inquired Maxwell, half in fun and half in earnest.

‘Not exactly,’ she answered, colouring, as she saw every one looking at her. ‘I didn’t think I should like it at first; but Miss Warner had talked so that she made me feel that it was my duty, having good health and leisure; and at last I began to be afraid of living without doing something. Besides,’ she added, still more nervously, ‘since I first knew her, I have felt very differently about many things to what I did before.’



‘Miss Warner is a wonderful person,’ remarked Mrs. Warrington, ironically; and, the train stopping here, the conversation was interrupted, though, as we shall find, not forgotten by every one.

The boys were in great spirits during the remainder of the journey, which was performed with post-horses, and in a large, roomy carriage.

Near the head of the Vale of Sierbach they stopped to examine the ruins of the Abbey of Allerheiling, and seven or eight most picturesque waterfalls; and, to Annie's great delight and amusement, they found it necessary in going up a steep ascent, in crossing the Kniebis, to employ oxen as well as horses to draw them.

Very rural-looking farm-houses were scattered about pretty thickly in some parts, and groups of peasants in their country dresses



crossed their path from time to time, and afforded them much amusement. The passage through the Black Forest was also found to be extremely wild and romantic; and as the party stopped and rested whenever they came to any object of interest, the whole of the journey was pronounced to be delightful, and every one seemed sorry when it was announced that Stuttgart was in

sight. Yet, as they descended one of the vine-clad hills by which it is surrounded, and looked down on the white country-houses with their green shutters scattered about on the outskirts of the city, it nevertheless looked very cosy and inviting; and the whole scene wore so fresh and cheerful an aspect that Martin jokingly remarked, that 'in such a country they could not become low-spirited for want of wine.'

'I doubt, though, if you won't find beer a more favourite beverage,' replied his father. 'What are those great, heavy buildings that one can see here and there among the houses?'

'Breweries, to the best of my belief,' answered Maxwell. 'Oh, of course, Germans could not do without their beer; though, as far as I know, there are none of the members of that body which chiefly promotes the beer-drinking system living hereabouts—are there?'

'What do you mean, Maxwell?' asked Mrs. Warrington.

'Why, mother, it's the students of Germany, you know, the "Burschenschaft," as they are called, who take the thing up really on principle. It's as much a part of their system, I suppose, to pour beer down their throats by the gallon, as it is to attend lectures—so I'm told, at least; and, consequently, these said students are people to be respected, they say.'

'Respected!' exclaimed Sophia. 'I should say, quite the contrary.'

'Well, you'll see,' answered her father, laughing: 'at any rate, we may possibly find Stuttgart none the less agreeable for not possessing a university. I hear that there are plenty of schools, and very good ones, too; so I think I shall look out for one to send Martin to; we could leave him on our way back; and it might make him a little more steady, if it did nothing else: only I don't know what studious Germans would say to such a dunce.'

‘A German school!’ exclaimed Martin in disgust: ‘why, I thought I had done with school, papa! Didn’t you say I was to have a private tutor when we go back to England?’

‘I had not decided on anything, Martin. I said, if you were enough of a man for it; which it seems to me very questionable whether you will be. Take notice of the steady-going school-boys that you will see here, and then tell me what you think of yourself.’

‘Is Stuttgart on the Neckar?’ interrupted Annie.

‘What! you want to show us how studious *you* are, young woman, do you?’ replied her father, smiling. ‘You seem to take a great interest in rivers. No: it isn’t on the Neckar, but about two miles distant from it.’

‘And what about the hotels, my dear?’ said Mrs. Warrington; ‘for that is more to the point just now.’

‘There is a very good one near the railway station in the Schloss Strasse, which is also near to the King’s palace. I have already given orders about that.’

‘The King’s palace!’ exclaimed Annie. ‘I did not know that Wirtemberg was a kingdom!’

‘Didn’t you?’ said Newton. ‘Why, Napoleon Buonaparte turned it from a duchy into a kingdom: don’t you know that?’

‘And what change did he make with Baden, through which we have just passed?’ asked Mr. Warrington, smiling.

‘Turned the Margrave into a Grand Duke,’ answered Newton, decidedly. ‘It is a grand duchy now.’

‘Dear me, Newton, you are learned!’ remarked Martin. ‘I declare you will make us all feel small! But may I ask, my good fellow, whether you could have obliged us with these little pieces of information before leaving England?’

‘I had heard them before then, certainly,’ replied Newton, a little piqued.

‘And the guide-book refreshed your memory?’ pursued Martin.

‘And what if it did?’ asked Newton, in a huffy tone.

‘Only then you would not have so much cause to crow over me, you know,’ chuckled Martin, in his mischievous, good-humoured way, and giving him a nudge at the same time.

Fortunately for Newton the carriage at this moment stopped before the door of the hotel, where they were to make themselves comfortable until the Countess von Löwenthal had been duly informed of their arrival, and was ready to receive them.

The time was pleasantly spent in making themselves acquainted with the surrounding country, as well as in visiting the Museum and other public buildings, and in fixing on suitable subjects for their sketch-books.

But in the eyes of Florence and her brother the people had, as we may imagine, a greater interest than any natural objects, and those at home, being ignorant of the reason, were naturally considerably amused at the violent fancy which they seemed suddenly to have taken for the study of character.

Nor, indeed, were they themselves previously aware how enticing that kind of study is, until they had for some time been exercising their ingenuity in the art of making acquaintances among the Wirtemburgers, and in getting admittance now into a cottage, now into a more substantial house.

They found them a particularly open-hearted, ingenuous, and pleasing people, remarkably primitive and simple in many of their habits; and the narration of their adventures in this way frequently afforded much amusement to the rest of the family in the evenings.

‘I do believe,’ said Maxwell, one day, when they had returned from an excursion of the kind, ‘that this sister of mine will bring me over to her way of thinking before I am much older. I really am getting quite to enjoy poking about in and out of cottages, and chatting with the inmates. What would my father’s tenants say if I were to go back a convert, and an ally of Miss Warner’s, now, I wonder! And, by-the-bye, there seems to be a good number of such folks as she is here, by all accounts: doesn’t there, Flo? Did you know, sir,’ he added, addressing his father, ‘that the people here are most wonderfully good?’

‘Now, Maxwell,’ interrupted Florence, ‘if you turn everything to joke I really won’t tell you anything.’

‘What piece of information have you been giving him?’ asked her father, encouragingly.

‘Only something that Susie mentioned in her letter to-day. She says, that only about thirty years ago half the missionaries that were out among the heathen were from Wirtemberg, and a very large proportion are still from hereabouts.’

‘Why, you see,’ said Maxwell, ‘we went for a long stroll this morning, and it was very hot; so when, at last, we came in sight of a sort of little hut among the trees, we were glad to get leave from the fellow to whom it belonged to go in and rest for a little while, and have a good drink of new milk. He was a jolly old fellow, so we got a little information about all sorts of things out of him: first about the king and the royal family; and we heard all sorts of gossip about the princes and princesses; and how easy it is to get to see his majesty; and how affable the queen is; and how little state is kept up in the court compared with what there is in our court; and so on. He made us laugh, too, by his description of the royal kitchens,

and told us that five or six times a-day two large blue cases, filled with all sorts of smoking-hot victuals, are carried out from a certain door by two servants in livery, preceded by a very stout Swiss in magnificent clothes, with a cane in one hand, and the other on the hilt of his sword. His description of this fellow's swagger was inimitable. Wasn't it, Flo?'



'But what has all that to do with what you were saying about the missionaries?' asked Mr. Warrington.

'Oh, nothing: but I was going to tell you how the good man, when he had done his court stories, got upon a more serious tack. I don't know how he worked round, I'm sure; but, somehow or other, he began by telling us that one day, after a hard day's work, he was sitting outside his door—just as they do, you know, with his

queer old hat on, no doubt; and smoking his pipe, of course—and who should he spy but a young gentleman from a neighbouring town, whose father he had known before him,—a worthy man he was, and so forth; and how he had lost sight of the said young gentleman for several years past,—and how he was altered, and how he had been to the College at Basle to get ready to be a missionary, and was going on his way to England “to be finished,” as he called it. And then, didn’t we have a charming description, Flo, of the evening which this same student passed in the poor man’s cottage, and how the neighbours came, and they had such a meeting! I dare say he meant to do us good now, and began his droll stories first just to catch us.’

‘I *liked* hearing him talk,’ said Florence, with much feeling; ‘but do you know that I found out from his little daughter that he is very poor, and that the family have had a great deal of trouble.’

‘I should never have thought it,’ returned Maxwell, emphatically; ‘and, indeed, if he hadn’t seemed such an honest fellow, I could scarcely believe it now.’

‘You would if you had seen what I have, Max dear,’ she answered, as her cheeks burned with the effort of getting out what she wanted to say. ‘Poor in this world, but rich in faith, you know: those are the happiest people, and the most cheerful. I can show you several in Sunnington, of whom you would say, from looking at their faces, that they have never known sorrow. When you go back, you shall come and see them.’

‘Shall?’ he repeated, laughing: ‘we shall see about that.’

‘Yes, we shall see,’ she answered, coaxingly; but her mother interrupted by expressing a doubt about the poverty, and by a remark about the frequency of impositions.

‘But, mamma,’ she answered, ‘we have made all sorts of

inquiries, not only from themselves but their neighbours; and besides, Miss Warner is not a person to be easily taken in, though she is so kind.'

'Then probably they have but little feeling,' Mrs. Warrington remarked. 'Some people could endure all sorts of things without much suffering; while to another the same pain would be unbearable.'

'I don't think that these are at all of that sort, though, mamma,' she replied: 'not, at least, from all that I can hear.'

'Then, how do you account for the phenomenon?'

'I was puzzled beyond everything, at first; but now I know them, I see that what Miss Warner said is true,—“They endure as seeing Him who is invisible.” One old man said to me, just lately, that “though his old bones do often ache when it is cold, he could feel now that it didn't much matter, because his time here was so short; and then, when eternity opened on him, it would be all joy and no sorrow for ever and ever.”'

Florence could hardly get out all this, for she knew that every one was looking at her, and some quizzing; but Martin, who, as I before mentioned, was, as he said, 'particularly partial to his sister,' saw how she was feeling, and good-naturedly drew off their attention by asking when they were going to pay their visit at the grand house upon the hill.

'Perhaps on Thursday next,' answered his mother: 'the Countess writes that her present visitors will then be gone, and she will be quite ready to receive us.'

Now this Countess von Löwenthal was an old dowager, who belonged to one of the most ancient families in Germany, and as she could reckon her descent back some thirty or forty generations she was regarded, even in spite of the decay of her fortune, as a very honourable person.

The Germans are a loyal people, and have a profound respect for rank and noble birth ; although, while they thus regard nobility, they do not despise trade or tradesmen : in fact, the burghers have a position of their own, and that so honourable a one that but little, comparatively, of that struggling for a higher rank, and aping of those above them, which are so common in England, are seen there. Indeed, it has been known that the daughters of burghers have rejected noble suitors, simply because they would not leave their own rank.

So the Countess von Löwenthal lived on in her own old castle, and with very little money kept up her dignity.

Some of the young folks had, however, rather a shrinking from the stiffness and formality which they expected to find in her household ; but in this respect they were agreeably surprised.

One suite of rooms was appropriated to their use, and they were left to spend their mornings as they liked, and to join their kind hostess at meal-times, or in the evenings ; so that they soon felt themselves quite at home in the Castle.

The kind old Countess was a good specimen of a German lady of rank,—feminine, yet dignified, in her manners, with a good deal of lively wit, and a voice which had been carefully cultivated, and which, when she spoke, attracted every one to listen. She had once, evidently, been beautiful, and her appearance was still striking and engaging ; but her dress was usually simple and homely, and suited to her particularly domestic habits. Indeed, German ladies seldomer look on stylish dress as a sign of rank than we do in England. That is more often shown in their footman's dress than in their own ; yet on festive occasions they can dress magnificently.

And these, to Florence's distress, too often came on a Sunday,

which in Germany is, unhappily, more often regarded as a *holiday* than as a *holy* day.

She soon found that one service at the Lutheran Church in the morning, letter-writing or visiting in the afternoon, and a ball or musical entertainment, formed the usual histories of Sundays at the Castle, while she could not persuade herself that her own family were right in conforming in this respect to the custom of the country.

Very trying it was, notwithstanding, to be told that her scruples ought to be laid aside in deference to the opinions of others,—that she would be only acting pharisaically in standing out; and on this occasion her mother's sharp words, her father's severe remarks, and her sister's unkind ones, drove her at last to take refuge in the retirement of her own room, where she could give way to her feelings.

On her return an hour afterwards to the family circle she was surprised at the unusual silence that prevailed. Every one was still looking vexed or displeased; but none so much so as Maxwell, who had been absent during the conversation that had recently taken place. He, however, kindly, though silently, made room for her on the sofa beside him, and when, shortly after, the party one by one dispersed, he turned to his sister and proposed a walk.

'You have had a grand row this morning, haven't you, Flo?' he said, as soon as they were out of hearing. 'But never mind, I think I've settled the matter; and I don't expect you'll be persecuted any more.'

'Settled it! How, Maxwell? I don't understand,' she answered, looking puzzled.

'Why,' he answered, 'I told them plainly, that if they were

going to begin persecution I should be off; and they don't want that, I fancy. You know I don't agree with you; but let every one have liberty of conscience, say I; and if that isn't to be allowed here, why, I'm off—that's all.'

'Oh, Maxwell!' exclaimed Florence: 'but I hope there was no quarrel on my account. Papa must have been very angry if you said that.'

'And so he was,' replied her brother, hotly; 'but I can't help it. I'm not going to stand by and see any one forced to act against their conscience.'

'I don't see how I could have given way,' remarked Florence, thoughtfully; 'but I was very anxious not to have a quarrel.'

'Well, you needn't now, as far as I can judge,' returned her brother. 'You won't hear any more about it.'

'Then how shall I manage about next Sunday?' she asked. 'The Countess will miss me from the ball.'

'I suppose you wouldn't mind going on a week-day?' he asked, resuming the half-teasing way in which he generally spoke to his sister about what he called her peculiarities. 'Some of your good people don't like such things at all, you know.'

'I can't make up my mind about that,' she answered: 'it is such a little while since the time when I thought of no happiness beyond them. But I don't feel any doubt about Sundays, so I can't see how I could yield the point.'

'Why should you?' he answered, positively. 'Your conscience wouldn't be worth much if it were so elastic. But you needn't trouble yourself. I have undertaken to make your excuses, as my mother could not think of doing such a thing. And there's no difficulty, for it is not the custom in England; and that is quite enough. I doubt whether you can go to church, though;

for I don't think there is a second service at any one near here. So what will you do with yourself?'

'Susie told me a great deal about some private meetings, which she liked very much, and which she thought made up for many things that we have in England. She told me that it was believed that the wonderful missionary spirit of Wirtemberg had arisen through the means of such little gatherings; and I should very much like to know some of the good people whom she met.'

Maxwell laughed good-naturedly in answer to this; but he also told her that he had heard of one, and, in fact, had an invitation himself, which if she liked he could accept for her, though he should not go.

In great delight she begged him to do so, adding many persuasions that he would go himself also, though without success. A sudden thought seemed to strike him just as they turned in again to the house, and he said in a low tone, 'By-the-bye, that good lady ought to be able to tell you something. Scrape acquaintance with her, Florence, if you can, and follow out that clue that I gave you yesterday.'

On their entrance every one seemed to have recovered from their irritation, and the two boys and Annie, who had just returned from their German lesson, were eagerly communicating various scraps of local information. Annie had discovered the origin of the town,—that it began in a stud kept by an old Duke of Wirtemberg, and thence obtained its name; while Newton had heard of wonderful painted windows and paintings in the palace, of which, therefore, he was begging to see the interior.

'I wonder whether you have first thoroughly examined the outside, and the statues that stand there,' answered Mr. War-

rington. 'There is one particularly worthy of your notice. I mean the great bronze statue of Schiller, who once lived in this city.'

'Schiller, papa! And pray who was he?' asked Martin. 'I never heard of him.'

'Never heard!' Newton began; but, recollecting Martin's late hint, he suddenly stopped himself, while Mr. Warrington answered that 'Schiller was a great German writer, who wrote one of his first plays while physician to a regiment quartered in Stuttgart;' and then he added,—

'And he was a friend of Göthe, who took his degree at Strasburg, Mr. Lucan told me: wasn't he, uncle?' said Newton.

'Yes: you will read some of the writings of both, I should fancy, before very long,' his uncle answered; and so they went on chatting, without any allusion to what had passed.

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CHAPTER IV.

‘WELL, Annie,’ said her father, some weeks after this, ‘we are going to carry you off to-morrow, to make acquaintance with another famous river. You have seen the Rhine and the Neckar: what do you say to paying a visit now to the old Danube itself?’

‘What! to the very king of European rivers, papa? Oh, delightful! I’m so glad!’

‘It isn’t the longest river in Europe,’ cried Martin; ‘I know as much as that, now: so why do you call him the king?’

‘Annie is quite right, I’m sure,’ interposed Sophia. ‘He is the king—isn’t he, papa?’

‘I think so,’ answered Mr. Warrington, laughing; ‘because it runs through so many central countries, and, therefore, though smaller than the Volga and Don, is of more importance.’

‘*He!*’ exclaimed Martin. ‘What do you call a river *he* for, I should like to know? Is it that because it moves you think it must be alive?’

‘No,’ returned Sophia; ‘not for that reason at all, Master Quiz: but just because a river has so many associations connected with it that I always think of it as a sort of historical personage.’

‘The Danube has not so many sentimental associations, though, as the Rhine, I think,’ remarked her mother. ‘All the old legends seem connected with the Rhine.’

‘No; there is one very famous national one, which unites them both, mother,’ said Maxwell. ‘Have you ever heard the story of the Niebelungen? That begins on the Rhine and finishes on the Danube.’

‘What is it about?’ asked Annie, eagerly.

‘Oh, the story of a great massacre perpetrated by Chriemhild, the wife of Attila the King of the Huns, in revenge for the murder of her first husband and the seizure of her treasure.’

‘What place are we going to stay at next, then?’ asked Martin. ‘You are all going on contentedly enough without knowing that, it seems.’

‘We are going to Ulm,’ replied Maxwell; ‘that was settled last night, young man, after you had gone to roost.’

‘And what sort of a place is it, pray? anything to see there?’

‘Plenty,’ replied his father; ‘at least there was, when I last paid it a visit. Ulm is a regular old town of the middle ages, and when you get there you will feel as if you had jumped back some five or six centuries. One side of the town is in Wirtemberg and the other in Bavaria, and because it has a federal fortress it is under the command of the Germanic Diet, which meets at Frankfort: so it may be said to have three masters.’

‘And are we to travel as we did coming here?’ asked Martin.

‘Yes,’ said his father; ‘because I want you to see a modern castle, the castle of Lichtenstein, which was built not many years ago on the summit of a high rock; and also the spot where the family of Frederick Barbarossa once lived.’

‘Who was Frederick Barbarossa?’ asked Annie. ‘I cannot recollect, though I know I have read about him.’

‘Ask Newton,’ said her father, seeing that young gentleman looking rather brimful of information.

‘He was an Emperor of Germany, wasn’t he?’ answered Newton,—‘Frederick the First, I think. And wasn’t he a very



warlike sort of fellow, that settled some squabbles between Canute and Sweyn about the throne of Denmark?’

‘Yes, quite right; and he made Canute his vassal. What else?’

‘I don’t know,’ said Newton.

‘I’m so glad!’ cried Martin, clapping his hands. ‘I like to hear you say that you don’t know.’ But Mr. Warrington only quietly informed them that Barbarossa afterwards went against the Milanese and took Milan; and Martin, who was not particularly interested in the subject, then dragged his cousin off to prepare for the journey next day.

Ulm turned out, indeed, an old city. Its houses, which are built of wood, with many stories overhanging each other, just suited Newton; and he and Annie made a note in their journals that ‘they were worth a hundred Regent Streets!’ But the Danube was very disappointing, especially to Annie, as it is there only a narrow stream.

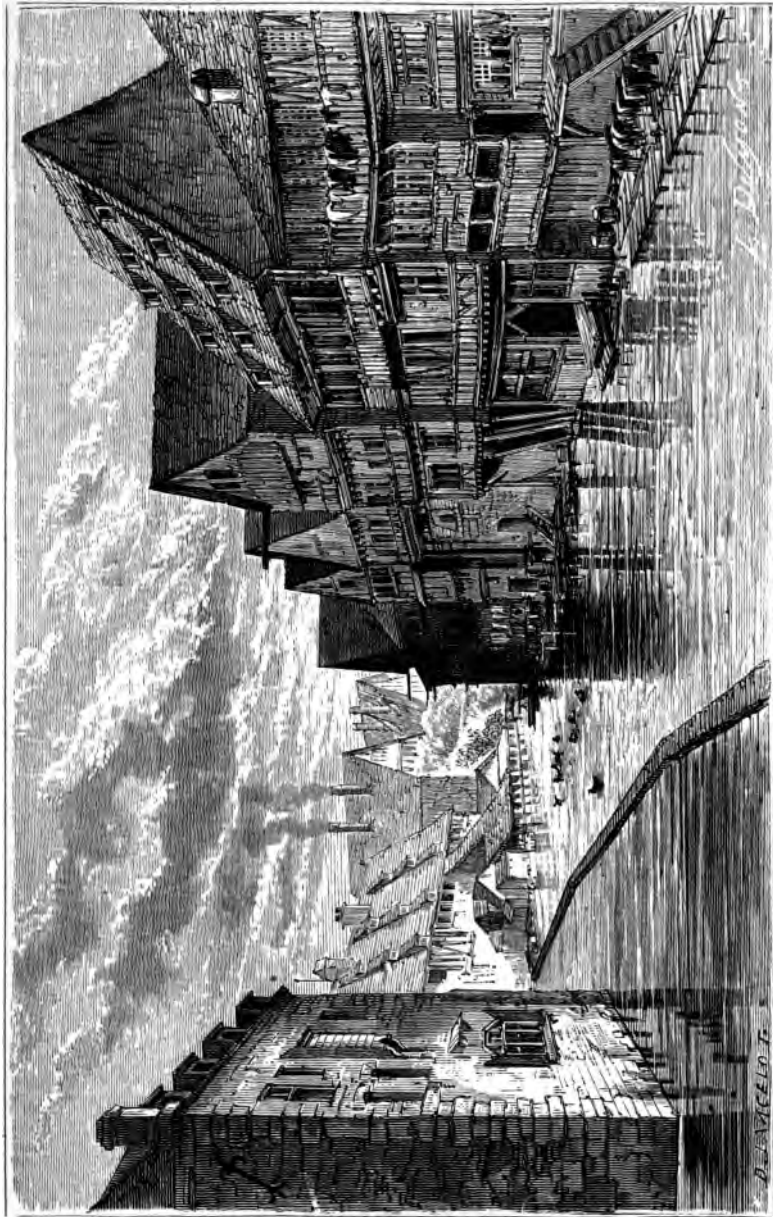
‘A German poet,’ remarked her eldest brother, ‘once said, that at its rise on the borders of France it is so small that a shepherd can take it all up in his glass.’

‘Oh, yes!’ said Martin, laughing. ‘My dear Annie, it’s no such great shakes after all. Why, if the old fellow hadn’t so many branches you’d never have heard of him at all. So you needn’t think much of the swell he cuts at last. He’s only a swaggering old gentleman that’s got rather stout in his old age.’

‘May be then,’ returned Annie, smartly, ‘if you were to look out for as many little rills of knowledge, and suck them all in as they pass, you might even cut as great a figure yourself one of these days, my dear Martin; and then we shan’t mind if you are rather stout!’

‘Bravo, little Annie!’ cried Maxwell; ‘that’s the way! pay him off well, and don’t put up with his impudence! But look out here, young ones! What’s coming?’

‘Hurrah!’ shouted Martin, as a group of young people on stilts passed them; and as by his gesture he seemed as if



THE DANUBE AT ULM.

about to play some awkward pranks among them, the children all looked relieved when they had got safely out of his way.

‘We are not to be here long,’ said the elder brother, as both the boys were inclined to linger, or rather to follow and join in the sport, ‘and you will see plenty more of stilt-playing, as it happens to be a favourite game in this town; so now,



I think, we will make the best of our time. Let us thoroughly scour the town to-day, and then we can conduct my mother and sister easily to what is best worth seeing. We have no guide here, you know, so we must do the best we can for ourselves.’

‘No,’ returned Newton, despondingly; ‘but it is much better fun when we have. Do you think my friend the ——’ here

he suddenly ducked out of the way of a threatened box on the ear from his cousin, and laughingly continued,—

‘Well, *our* friend the Professor, then, Mr. Maxwell; do you think he will really join us anywhere in Germany?’

‘Can’t say,’ answered his cousin, looking significantly at Florence; ‘that depends on several things, it appears: partly, perhaps, on whether you get altogether past bearing. But as he is your particular friend you ought to know best.’

‘I wish I did,’ returned the lad; ‘but he hasn’t informed me, you see.’

‘Ugh! ugh!’ exclaimed Martin, who had just been peeping into an open cask that stood at the side of the road among a number of others. ‘What on earth have we got here?’

‘Snails, I declare!’ said Annie, as she too took a peep. ‘How disgusting! What can they be for?’

No one could tell; so Maxwell made it his business to inquire, and found that these creatures are fattened in the surrounding districts, and that about four millions of them are annually exported to Austria and other Roman Catholic countries, where they are thought a great delicacy, especially during Lent.

‘But it is not a Roman Catholic town, is it?’ asked Annie.

‘No; the Minster itself is now a Protestant Church.’

‘Ah, by-the-bye, that Minster! when are we going to see it?’ asked Martin.

‘In a day or two probably, Master Impatient,’ returned his brother. ‘We will go and make a few inquiries, and then see if we can arrange for a visit as soon as it suits my father and the ladies.’

‘What a magnificent building!’ was the general cry, as they came into a street from which a good view of it could be

obtained; and Florence remarked that her father had told her 'that it was one of the six finest Gothic Cathedrals of Germany, and that its tower was to have been even higher than Strasburg spire, but was left unfinished because two piers, which supported one side, gave way, and thus thwarted the architect in his design.'

They passed on; and, after examining some of the fortifications, came into a street where there was a very curious-looking baker's shop, constructed, as most of the shops are, without any shop-window, or display of goods; but with a table standing in front, and one small opening over it, through which the goods were passed; which Maxwell explained to the young folks was a proof that it was built in semi-barbarous times, when it was not safe to show more than one thing at once, lest the customer should seize the goods and make off.

But there was something about this baker's shop which particularly arrested the attention of Florence. She examined the whole front, and the signs, and all the neighbouring ones; then looked up and down the street; and lastly, when a woman went to the opening to make a purchase, she made a point of getting a good view of the person inside, and then, stepping behind the boys and Annie, she whispered to Maxwell,—

'It is the very place, I'm certain.'

'Are you sure?' he asked, quickly.

'Perfectly certain,' said Florence. 'We must come here by ourselves this evening, and make out all that we can.'

The moon was shining brightly when they returned to the street some hours after, and Florence, approaching the window, tapped, and asked for a particular kind of little loaf which she had seen that morning at the hotel, describing its form and size

with great particularity, and looking steadily into the woman's face as she did so.

No such loaf was in the shop; but others were brought, and after selecting one she said,—

‘We are strangers in this town, and only remaining here a short time; but I am anxious to become acquainted with the wife of one of your physicians. Could you inform me where Doctor —— lives?’

The question was answered, and she continued,—

‘He was attending, I believe, an English family of the name of Walker some time last winter: do you happen to know to what place they removed on leaving this? I have been informed that they are still in the neighbourhood, and I wish to find them out.’

‘Ah, yes! I know the family of whom you speak, young lady,’ replied the woman, the expression of whose mild, benevolent face began to show that she was interested in the subject. ‘We served them with bread all the while they were here; but I never spoke to any of them but a little, tiny child, that used to come with the governess sometimes to buy some little odd thing, and have five minutes’ chat. A sweet young lady she was!’

‘What, the little girl?’ asked Florence.

‘No, I meant the governess; though the child was well enough—her “one little sunbeam,” Miss Morgan used to say.’

‘Ah,’ returned Florence, with apparent indifference, ‘I heard they had a nice governess. Wasn’t her other name Constance, or something like it?’

‘That was it, the dear angel! for she wrote it inside of a little book she gave me just before she went away. Ah, poor dear! she had a sorrowful heart.’

‘Why so?’ Florence inquired.



BAKER'S SHOP AT ULM.

'Because she was all alone in the wide world, my dear lady. Ah, there's many a weeping flower like that, that the cold world knows nothing about.'

'What! was she always crying?' interrupted Maxwell, in a tone of assumed contempt. He had hitherto stood by as if uninterested in the matter, and shown signs of impatience at being thus detained.

'No,' returned the woman; 'at least, not with visible tears: for she was obliged to put on a cheerful face: but she told me that her heart would often weep, whether she would or no.'

'Governesses make a point of being discontented, and thinking themselves badly used,' again remarked Maxwell, bluntly; but he was cut short by the good woman's indignant reply, and by her declaring that she 'wouldn't think much of any girl that didn't sorrow when she had been left an orphan as it were twice over, as this one had been.'

And then Florence, feeling that she was called on in common humanity to show the sympathy she so truly felt, warmly asked for further particulars, and received all the information which she had anticipated, and which quite identified the young lady as the one whom she was seeking. But when the good baker's wife, in the warmth of her heart, mentioned as her chief trial, the fear she had that her old friends had deserted her, because no answer had ever been received to any letter sent during the last eighteen months, Florence could not help starting and glancing at her brother.

'And now for this Dr. What-do-you-call-him,' said Maxwell, fiercely, as they left the shop. 'We'll find it all out, and defeat that wretched old guardian yet.'

'If the poor thing is still in the land of the living,' added

Florence ; 'but you know it was she that the Doctor was attending here. She was very ill, the good lady at Stuttgart told me; and she said I should most likely hear more at this shop.'

'Why can't she always keep her address?' asked her brother, impatiently.

But Florence reminded him that *she* did not know all that they did, and that, besides, they had no reason to suppose the Walkers to be unkind to her.

'Well, at any rate,' he answered, 'I'll go and inquire after that cousin of theirs, whom I saw once or so at College; and then you'll have an opportunity of finding out what we want to know.'

All that they wanted to know could not thus, however, be learnt; for the good Doctor was not sure whether the family were still in the neighbourhood of Augsburg, where for a time they had hired a house; nor even whether Miss Morgan was still with them, though both seemed probable: and the brother and sister returned home, chiefly eager to find some excuse for getting on, as was proposed, to Augsburg, as soon as possible. Nor was Florence sorry to be excused an enthusiastic description of all she and her brother had seen in their moonlight ramble, under cover of her pleasure in receiving home letters, which had arrived whilst she was out.

With great interest she read of how the Grevilles were far more than keeping up what she had begun, and of how nicely they and Miss Warner worked together; but she could not repress a smile when she found in her friend's letter a request that she would try and find out for her a widow lady whom she had once casually met while travelling in Germany, and to whom she had taken a great fancy, partly, as she acknowledged, because she was a descendant of a friend of Luther's; and she said to herself, 'Is

it to be my life's work to be always hunting up other people's lost friends?' while she secretly rejoiced in this new excuse for pursuing the inquiries in which she felt so much interested.

When, however, all that was to be seen had been seen in Ulm—and this Maxwell contrived should soon be accomplished—a combination of adverse circumstances seemed to forbid the hope of anything more than a short stay in that city, which, for several reasons, was one of so much interest to her.

The first of these was the strong and most unaccountable prejudice which Sophia had taken with regard to Augsburg, and her great desire to proceed at once to Nuremberg, where they had an invitation to spend some time in the house of a rich merchant, who was a friend of her father's; and as she and Maxwell were considered to have the chief voices in the decision of their route, a hot discussion on the subject took place. These two never had exactly agreed; and while Sophia was not, in general, easily put out of temper by any one, it was always evident that Maxwell could do it in a moment; and just at that time he used especially to irritate her, by never appearing to believe her to be really out of health.

'Augsburg was a mere modern city,' she declared: 'so every account that she had seen described it.'

'But it has fine modern works of art,' persisted Maxwell, 'according to the very same authorities; and though not what it was once, when it was the seat of a sovereign bishop, and an imperial city, it has still its importance as a commercial one; and, next to Frankfort, it is the principal European money-mart.'

'Money-mart!' repeated Annie; 'what can that mean?'

'Well, all the trade between Germany and Italy is in the hands of Augsburg merchants,' returned her brother; 'and any

one who has payments to make in Italy or the Levant places his money in their hands.'

'Then it was the first city in Europe in which water was laid on into the houses,' added Florence: 'and the old works are still to be seen, they say.'

'And its historical associations are superior to what most towns can boast,' added Maxwell. 'I wonder if you know anything about your namesake, Master Martin, and his adventures there?'

'My namesake!' exclaimed the young gentleman, opening his eyes in astonishment. 'Who in the world can you be thinking of?'

'Why, Martin Luther, the great German Reformer, of course,' returned Newton.

'Oh! Luther you mean, do you!' said Martin, carelessly. 'Well, great or little, I don't know much about him. But what had he to do with Augsburg, pray?'

'He was summoned before the Diet of Augsburg to meet the Cardinal Cajetan, who came there to convince him of his errors, and to require him to recant them under pain of the displeasure of the Pope,' said Florence, quietly.

'Humph!' said Martin. 'Well, I suppose that was rather a serious affair. What did he do? get frightened and give in, eh?'

'Give in?' cried Newton: 'you don't know much about him, certainly. I should just like to have seen Luther giving in! You had better take care how you talk before mamma, I can tell you; for he's tip-top in her opinion—that he is!'

'What! my Aunt Greville one of Luther's great admirers!' exclaimed Sophia. 'Well, I am surprised at that, such a great rough fellow as he was!'

‘People have different tastes on such matters,’ remarked Maxwell, rather contemptuously, ‘and it is quite as well that they have ; and especially that there are some who can value a jewel even in an unpolished casket.’ On which both Florence and Newton looked up in surprise ; and the latter said,—

‘Oh, I’m glad, then, that I have one on my side ! Now, wasn’t he a splendid fellow, Cousin Maxwell ?’

That young man was not, however, to be entrapped into saying any more, though he contrived both to excite Annie’s curiosity and to draw Newton out into giving a pretty complete account of the Reformer’s life, during the progress of which the boy became quite animated ; and the result of which was, that all the younger members of the party got to be suddenly very anxious to visit the city : which anxiety was heightened when Florence told them, that not only was it interesting as being the scene of Luther’s confession before the Diet, but also for the famous ‘Confession of the Protestants’ before the Emperor, Charles V.

And Sophia, who was far too generous to stand out against all their wishes, had given up the point rather than disappoint the others ; when other obstacles more insuperable arose, and the young people were obliged to be content with the promise that, if possible, they should spend a day in going and another in returning from Nuremberg, as it lay in their way, and they must pass it.

CHAPTER V.

BUT when it came to the time for proceeding on their way, even the single day to spend at Augsburg could not be found. A long time they had to wait for the train ; and during that time, which was not passed very agreeably amid the fumes of tobacco that so filled the waiting-room that but few figures were discernible, they were, notwithstanding, considerably amused by the consequential and stately airs of a German official, a long-coated, straight-looking gentleman, who stood resting his chin, for such a length of time, on the knob of his walking-stick, that Annie had leisure to get a very fair sketch of him in that page of her book which was devoted to 'characteristic figures.' She was very clever in this kind of drawing.

When the train came up our party got into a large carriage, in which was only one very respectable-looking old gentleman ; but scarcely were they seated than they would gladly have exchanged into another, as they perceived various coats and pipes in the different corners, the owners of which soon crowded in after them in the most noisy and uncereemonious way, and several of the young men were actually carrying into a first-class carriage large jugs and cans of ale, in which beverage they had evidently been already indulging rather too freely.

It was almost the first railway journey made by the War-

ringtons in this tour ; and, in spite of the warnings which they had previously received, both the gentlemen were on the point of breaking out into angry remonstrances, when they were recalled to a sense of what was prudent by the very uneasy expression of the countenance of their elderly companion ; while Sophia



as quickly took alarm, and by her whispered entreaties contrived to keep the boys quiet.

Fortunately, however, the annoyance ceased after a few miles, when their troublesome companions left them ; and almost before they were off the steps Martin broke out, ‘ University students, eh ! And a pretty set you are ! I say, Maxwell, I shan’t go to College at all if these are the manners you learn there.’

‘Where?’ asked his brother, contemptuously. ‘At Oxford or Cambridge—which? Because we don’t have such bears at the former, as far as my knowledge goes.’

‘Talk of your German Universities, then!’ said Newton. ‘And are these a specimen of their fine students?’

They did not guess that their English would be understood, until, to their surprise, their fellow-traveller joined in the conversation.

‘Every country and every government has its peculiar *goods and bads*,’ he said: ‘and this was *not* a strong point in his fatherland. They were too much afraid of the “Burschenschaft,” or body of students, and troubled themselves far too much about the opinions of mere raw youths: but as long as they were amenable only to University laws he did not see how it could be helped; for they were a numerous body, and the cause of many a revolutionary disturbance.’

‘Supremely ridiculous!’ remarked Mr. Warrington. ‘One wouldn’t have supposed that such a state of things could be suffered to continue.’

‘Well, well!’ answered the good man, ‘we shall not agree about that, I dare say; or rather, probably, you will use stronger language than I could join you in: though I confess this *is* a grievance. Will you allow me to inquire if you are going on to Nürnberg? Germans always call it so.’

The answer in the affirmative being given, the old gentleman immediately went on to enlarge on the wonders of that ancient city; and though rather garrulous, he was found to be a useful and entertaining companion.

‘The glory of our old city is gone,’ he said, sadly: ‘but though Napoleon took away our independence, and made us subject to the King of Bavaria, he could not take away our history, nor the

remembrances of what we once were. We have been declining in importance and in wealth for a longer period than has elapsed since his reign; but now our manufactures are looking up again. Once, you know,

“ Nuremberg’s hand
Went through every land ;”

and perhaps, one of these days, the old distich may come into fashion again. You must go and see our manufactures of lead-pencils, pill-boxes, and children’s toys!’

‘What curious articles on which to expend your energies!’ remarked Maxwell, laughing. ‘Pray don’t you do anything in a larger way?’

‘Oh, yes: but these are very important to us, and would perhaps amuse the young folks. You talk of *Dutch* toys in England, but most of those are made at Nürnberg. We also do a great deal of carving, both in wood and ivory. That is pretty work to see done, too.’

‘I suppose that the old city is much altered in appearance, in consequence of all these changes of fortune?’ remarked Mr. Warrington.

‘Not at all,’ replied his informant. ‘Hardly a city in Europe remains so much in its medieval condition. We are still surrounded by the old feudal walls and turrets, and we have four as picturesque arched gates as ever you saw in your life. Our churches and public buildings, too, have stood almost unharmed in the midst of many wars and sieges; and even the enthusiastic breakers of images in the times of the Reformation did not harm us, though we early became disciples of Luther. In its palmy days Nürnberg was sometimes called the Gothic Athens; and it has always been

a sort of rival of Venice. In what part of the town, may I ask, is your friend's house ?'

'Not very far from the Panier Platz,' replied Mr. Warrington ; 'and that, I am informed, is near to the Burg, or Castle.'

'It is ; and very beautiful the streets in that part are, to my mind,' replied the old gentleman, warmly. 'Some very ancient families reside in that locality. There is one—particular friends of mine they are, too—of the name of Keller : charming people, and descended from two of our ancient burgraves.'

'Keller !' repeated Maxwell : 'why, it is with them that we are going to stay ! And who are these old burgraves of whom you speak ?'

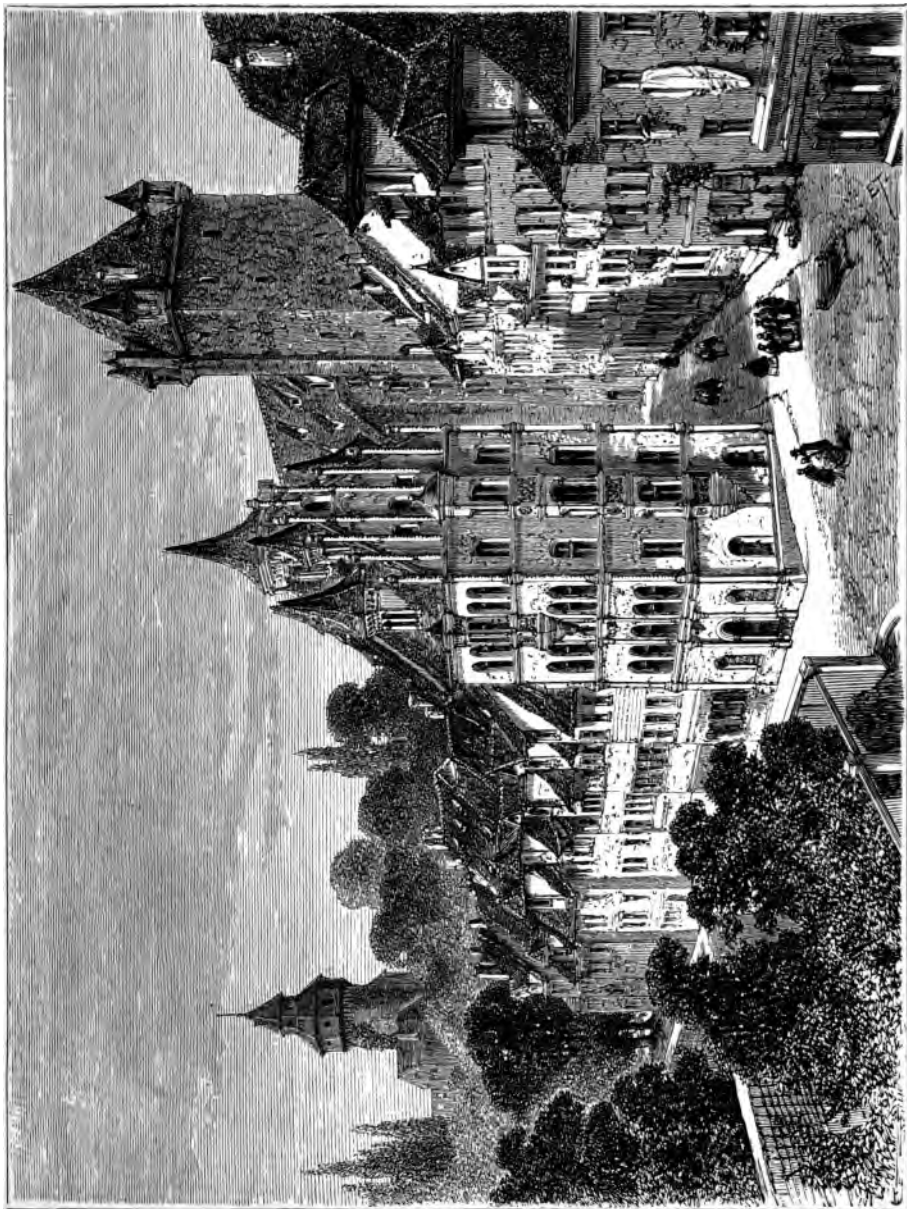
'They were a sort of stadtholder, generally chosen from a noble family, and appointed by the Emperor to live in a castle, and be a sort of protector of the city. The ancestors of the present royal family of Prussia began their career here as our burgraves.'

'Dear me !' cried Martin, in a jocose tone. 'Then we are going to stay with grandees ?'

'Aye, and very excellent ones, too !' rejoined Herr Schmidt, for such he had informed them was his name : 'and at their hospitable board I hope that we may meet again. You will have to cross the city to get to them, though ; and before starting I advise you to have a good look round the Hospital, which is close to the railway station. It is a handsome building, and you will like looking at it, because it was built by means of a tax laid on beer.'

'That is good !' cried Martin ; 'for then I'm sure those student fellows must have paid a good share towards it.'

Herr Schmidt laughed and continued,—'Then you go down



NUREMBERG.

König's Strasse, over our little river, the Pegnitz, by the King's Bridge, down Winkler's Street, where be sure to notice the house of poor Palm the bookseller, who, for publishing a pamphlet against Napoleon, was shot by him.'

'Shot!' exclaimed Newton; 'what a scoundrel that fellow was!'

'You think so, do you?' returned the chatty old gentleman.

'That I do!' said the boy, vehemently. 'One seems never to come to an end of his cruelties.'

'He lived to please himself, and he had more power to do it than most other men,' replied Herr Schmidt. 'Try *you* to live for some nobler end, my lad, or you may turn out a Buonaparte before you think it. But here we are at our journey's end; so, for the present, farewell.'

Our travellers were soon established in the house of Herr Keller, where they had been most hospitably received. It was an old-fashioned mansion, and numberless ancient traditions were connected with it; but, as is often the case in Germany, the ladies were, notwithstanding their easy circumstances, more domestic in their habits, and elegant in their manners, than possessed of cultivated minds.

Frau Keller was, however, a very charming, motherly person; and her mild blue eyes told truly of her loving nature. She was much beloved by all her children: but a shade of sadness, caused by the early death of a beloved little daughter, still hung over her, although several years had now passed since her bereavement; and as she had never since that time been so active in her household a great deal had devolved on the old nurse, now retained rather as a housekeeper, as Lulu, the eldest daughter, took less interest than her mother would have

liked to see in such matters. But she was a bright, lively, and beautiful girl, with a mind better stored with learning than most of her young countrywomen; her dear old Grossvater's especial favourite and companion, her brother's friend, and younger sister's governess. So Lulu was not idle.

Every one set it down at once that she was to be Florence's friend; but every one was mistaken. Lulu showed no particular fancy for Florence, nor did Florence show any liking for Lulu; while between her and Sophia an extraordinary intimacy soon sprang up.

As for Maxwell, he met an old schoolfellow very soon after his arrival, with whom he was out most of the day; while Annie was often in Frau Keller's kitchen, learning all her favourite recipes, that good lady having shown a particular affection for her from the first; and so Florence began to feel more alone than she had ever felt in her life before.

She spent much of her time in reading and study, and especially in making herself acquainted with the history of the place and country in which she was staying; and here she traced her favourite Luther passing through the city, on his way from Augsburg to his own city Wittenberg, under the Pope's ban, and flying from the treachery of his enemies. She found out the house of Hans Sach, the cobbler and poet of the Reformation, whose 6000 poems made such a stir in those stirring times; and, though not fond of drawing, she made a sketch of this for her dear friend, Miss Warner, who often wrote to encourage her in the pursuit of this art, telling her that, by-and-bye, it would prove more useful to her than she thought or expected. And Florence succeeded so well that she was induced by Newton to attempt another house, more interesting to him; namely, that of the great German painter, wood-engraver,



ALBERT DURER'S HOUSE AT NUREMBERG.

and engineer, Albert Durer ; also a contemporary of Luther, and one who had joined his party.

‘ They say he had a very bad-tempered wife, and that she was the cause of his death,’ said Newton, as they sat together in the old courtyard of a house, sketching. ‘ Some people call her a perfect Xantippe.’

‘ But I don’t believe she was anything of the kind,’ answered Florence. ‘ I have seen some of his letters, in which he speaks very well of her. But I dare say she had to be economical and careful, as artists’ wives often must be, and some might misunderstand that. She remained a Romanist, too, I believe ; and that might make others speak ill of her.’

‘ How strange it is,’ remarked Newton, ‘ that people always get so bitter over religious matters ! I wonder what can be the reason.’

‘ When we feel strongly about anything, we are all apt to get irritated with those who differ from us—aren’t we ?’ returned Florence. ‘ It’s very bad, certainly, to quarrel about religious opinions ; but do you know, Newton, I think it is even worse to see people treat them all with such profound indifference, as many seem to do here. They talk as if it didn’t matter what one believes so long as one is respectable and amiable, and seem to think that in old times people were very childish to get excited about such things.’

Just as she had uttered these words their old acquaintance, Herr Schmidt, came up, accompanied by a lady, whom he introduced as his daughter, and, after duly admiring their work, he offered to escort them to the Rathhaus, or Town Hall, into some of the older and now disused parts of which he would be able to gain them admittance.

On their way they passed again through the Market-place, always a favourite resort of theirs, from the liveliness of the scene,

and stood to admire the Frauen-kirche, or Church of our Lady, whose wonderful front and immense portico always drew from them bursts of admiration.

‘ Did you ever hear the story of the wonderful grey parrot that was found one morning perched on this market-cross, and, by its cries of “ Murder ! murder ! ” led to the discovery that such a crime had been perpetrated on its master ? ’ asked the old gentleman.

‘ No ! ’ exclaimed Florence and Newton, in a breath. ‘ Pray tell it to us. ’

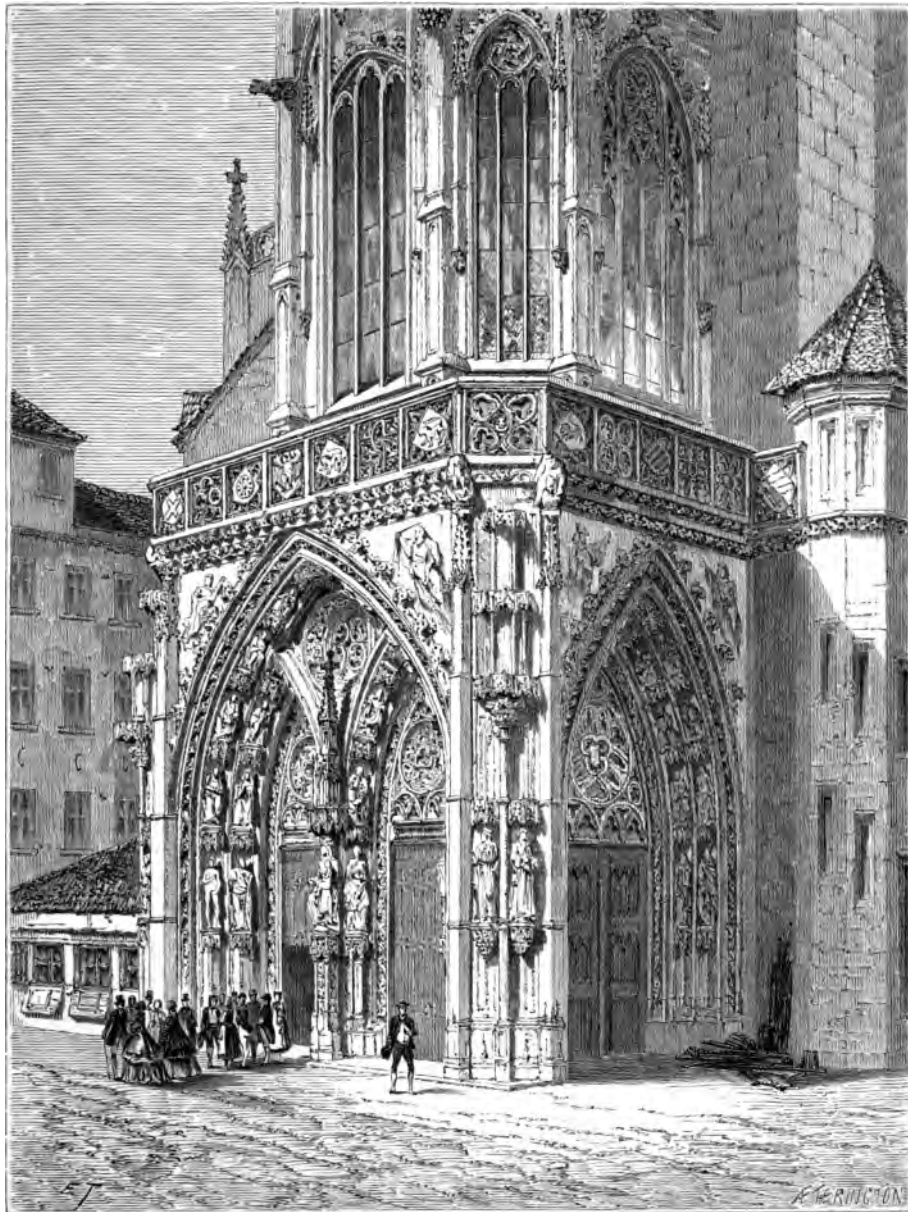
He was very ready to comply.

‘ Many years ago, ’ he said, ‘ there lived in a bad part of this town a shoemaker, named Carl Schnop, who had for a lodger an eccentric old gentleman, known as Herr Wouter. The dingy little room in which he lived just suited this strange individual, who wished to pass for a very poor person—being a miser.

‘ But one evening the shoemaker’s wife hurried to Carl’s workshop, to tell him that she had discovered that the two stone jars, in which Herr Wouter pretended to keep the meal of which he made his porridge, were really full of gold pieces, covered over with a sprinkling of meal.

‘ And the effect of this discovery was a horrible one ; for both the shoemaker and his wife soon resolved to murder the poor miser and steal his gold.

‘ But Herr Wouter had one companion, a wonderfully clever grey parrot ; and when the guilty shoemaker and his wife entered the room stealthily, the former with his great broad hammer, with which he beat his leather, in his hand, the parrot screamed out “ Who are you ? who are you ? ” even before the frightened miser could ask the question, or grasp the carbine that always hung over his bed ; and when he fell beneath the heavy blows, crying “ Murder ! murder ! ”



THE PORCH OF THE FRAUENKIRCHE, NUREMBERG.

the grey parrot took up the word, and began screaming it so loudly that Carl said to his wife,—

“Twist that villain’s neck while I carry the money to the cellar, or he’ll bring the town about our ears.”

‘But Frau Schnop could not seize the bird, much less twist his neck, so fiercely did he snap at and tear her hand.

“Get out of the way,” said Carl, when he came back, “and I’ll flatten him like shoe-leather in a twinkling.”

‘But it was a vain boast: for, though handfuls of his plumage were torn off, the poor bird could not be caught; and at last he darted through the door of the cage, and gave them a long chase round the room in the moonlight, for the candle had been buffeted out; and soon the heavy hammer went crashing through the window, and it was followed through the hole by the frightened bird, who went flying over the housetops, and screaming “Murder! murder!”

‘And so it was found, all ragged, bleeding, and forlorn, at daybreak; sometimes sitting in silence, and sometimes repeating its awful cry.

Every one noticed it, and while some treated it as a joke others looked very grave. An old woman, who sold grapes, at length recognised it as Herr Wouter’s bird; and then people began to ask questions.

‘The shoemaker and his wife both declared that Herr Wouter had gone out late on the preceding night and had not come back. But the woman’s torn hands were against her, especially as the doctor declared that the injuries had been inflicted by a bird; and when she and her husband were confronted with the parrot it became so excited, and screamed “Murder!” so fiercely, that she fell on her knees and confessed the whole.’

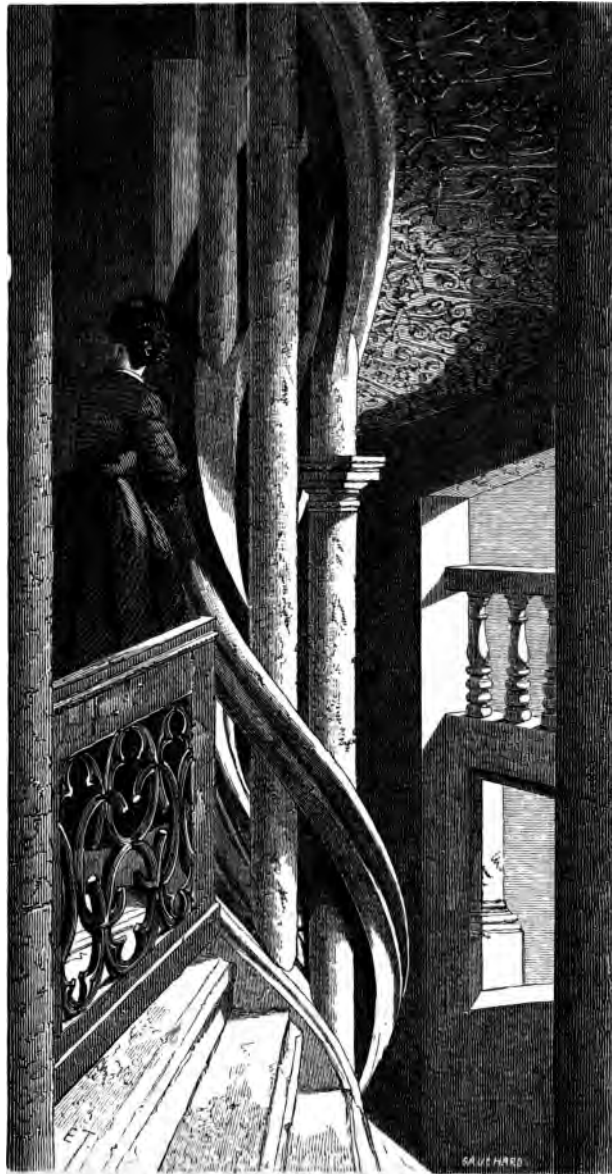
By the time this story was finished they had arrived at the Rathhaus, where open sittings of the magistrates are still held, and in which there is a fine representation of a tournament in alto-relief on the ceiling, which they were much interested in examining, as well as the painting and frescoes on the walls and windows, among which was a representation of the guillotine, which is thus shown to be two centuries older than the Revolution. Then Herr Schmidt proceeded to conduct them into the secret and subterraneous passages, only lately discovered, and which were once, probably, kept secret by the magistrates as means of escape, in case of tumultuous risings of the citizens.

Here, also, they saw the old torture-chamber, and many of the old horrible instruments of punishment, though the rack had been taken away; and Florence felt sick at heart as she pictured to herself the scenes of suffering that those walls had once witnessed. Nor could the assurance that the Nurembergers contrive now to conduct themselves in a peaceable manner, without such severe and barbarous punishments, induce her to remain many minutes in that dreadful place. So the kind old gentleman, who had not expected this effect on her spirits, and was vexed with himself for being the cause of pain when he meant to give pleasure, insisted on their both accompanying him to the house of a certain Herr Fuchs, a friend of his, which was situated in a street but little out of their way home, and in which, as he told them, there was the most curious spiral staircase in the world.

Up and down this both the young people, of course, had to run several times, though Florence would rather have been excused, as she was already tired; but Herr Schmidt reminded her of the great merry-making which was to take place in the

evening in some beautiful pleasure-grounds belonging to the Kellers, at which he, too, was to be present, and before which 'she really must,' he said, 'for his sake, get up her spirits.'

So she felt obliged not only duly to admire this staircase, but also afterwards to consent to go round and look at a church close by — the Church of St. Sebald — 'one of their very finest, and one in which a great deal of the work was by Adam Krafft;' for the enthusiastic old patriot declared that he would, of all things, like to take Miss Warrington to look at it also, and have



the pleasure of seeing how the first sight of it struck her. So round the street Thérèse they went, and most splendid they found the building to be.

‘What a door-way!’ cried Newton, as they stood before the Brautthüre, or Brides’ door. ‘I never saw anything so fine: It’s a pity that Annie is not here; isn’t it, Floey? for she is going to be a great female architect, you know, according to Martin. I never heard of this Adam Krafft before, but he must have been something like a sculptor, I should say. You have had some great men here, certainly, sir,’ he continued, addressing Herr Schmidt; ‘was he also a native of your city?’

‘He was; and we have kept more of his work than we have of Durer’s, of whose paintings we have but few. Have you heard of Martin Behaim, who claimed to have discovered Brazil before Columbus discovered Cuba? He made the first terrestrial globe. Then we have Peter Vischer, another good sculptor; and Peter Hele, the first watchmaker. Watches were called Nuremberg eggs then, on account of their oval shape. And again, Erasmus Ebner was one of our citizens. He discovered that particular alloy of metals called brass; for the brass you read of in the Bible, and ancient authors, was another combination. Hans Sobsinger also, who invented the air-gun, and Christopher Denner, who made the first clarionet, were both our men.’

‘But what were the chief causes of Nuremberg’s decay?’ asked Newton, who began to catch some of his old friend’s enthusiasm. ‘How could you decay, indeed, with such grand citizens?’

‘Well,’ returned the old gentleman, smiling, ‘some people say that the discovery of the passage to India round the Cape did our trade harm; but I attribute it chiefly to the bigotry which first

drove the Jews away from our walls, and then shut our gates against the Protestant refugee weavers, whom other German cities received. Then came the Thirty Years' War, with its desolation,



and the tide turned another way : for we early became, and still are, a Protestant city ; and for some centuries no Romanist was allowed to hold property amongst us.'

‘ Then you took the side of Gustavus Adolphus in the Thirty Years’ War?’ exclaimed Newton, eagerly. ‘ What a splendid fellow he was!’

‘ We did: and the Royal Protestant had to throw himself into our city and stand a siege of three months from the Imperial General, Wallenstein. But I am sorry to be obliged to add that, for the first time in his life, he was unsuccessful here, from want of provisions for such an army, though strongly backed by 30,000 of our brave men; so that he had at length to leave us a garrison and retreat.’

‘ Oh, what a pity!’ replied Newton.

‘ Yes,’ returned the old gentleman. ‘ It is a thing that I never can quite get over.’

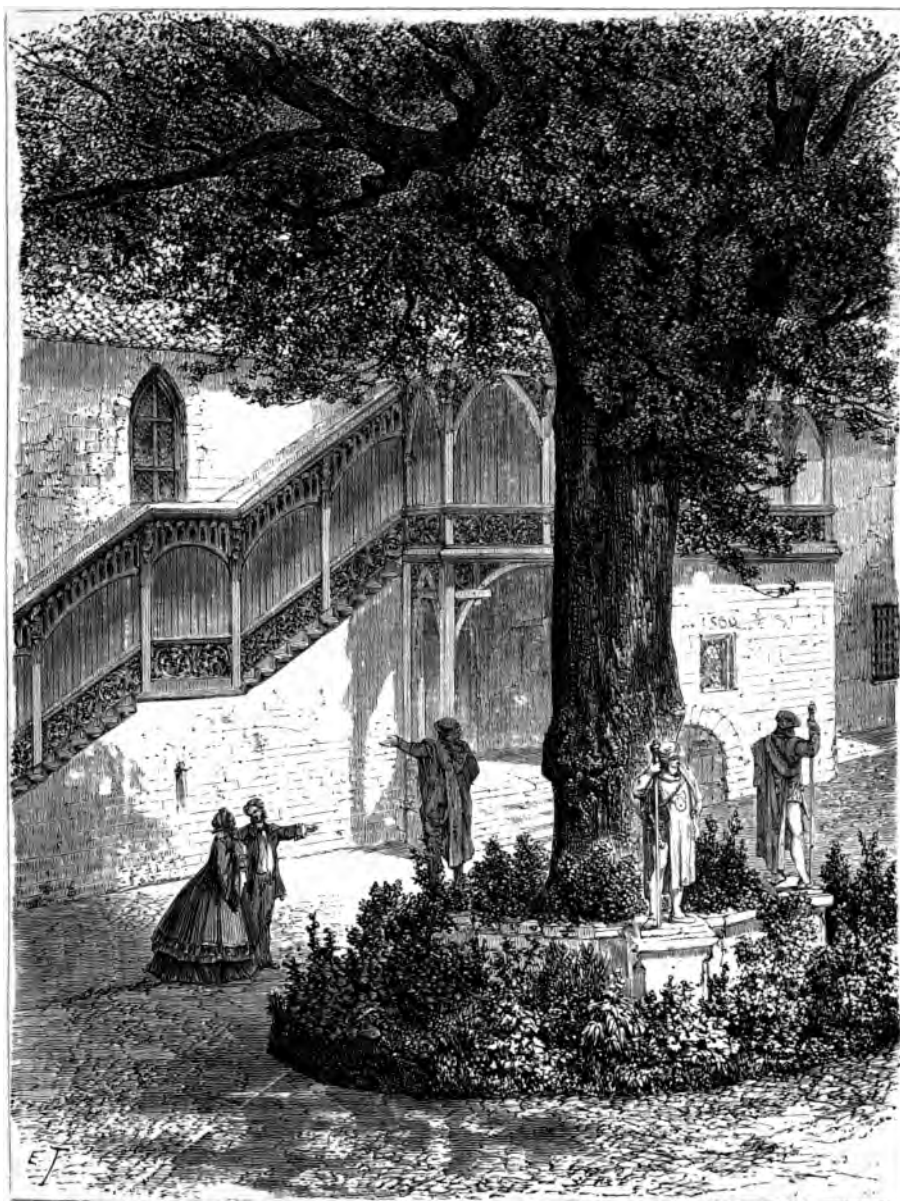
CHAPTER VI.

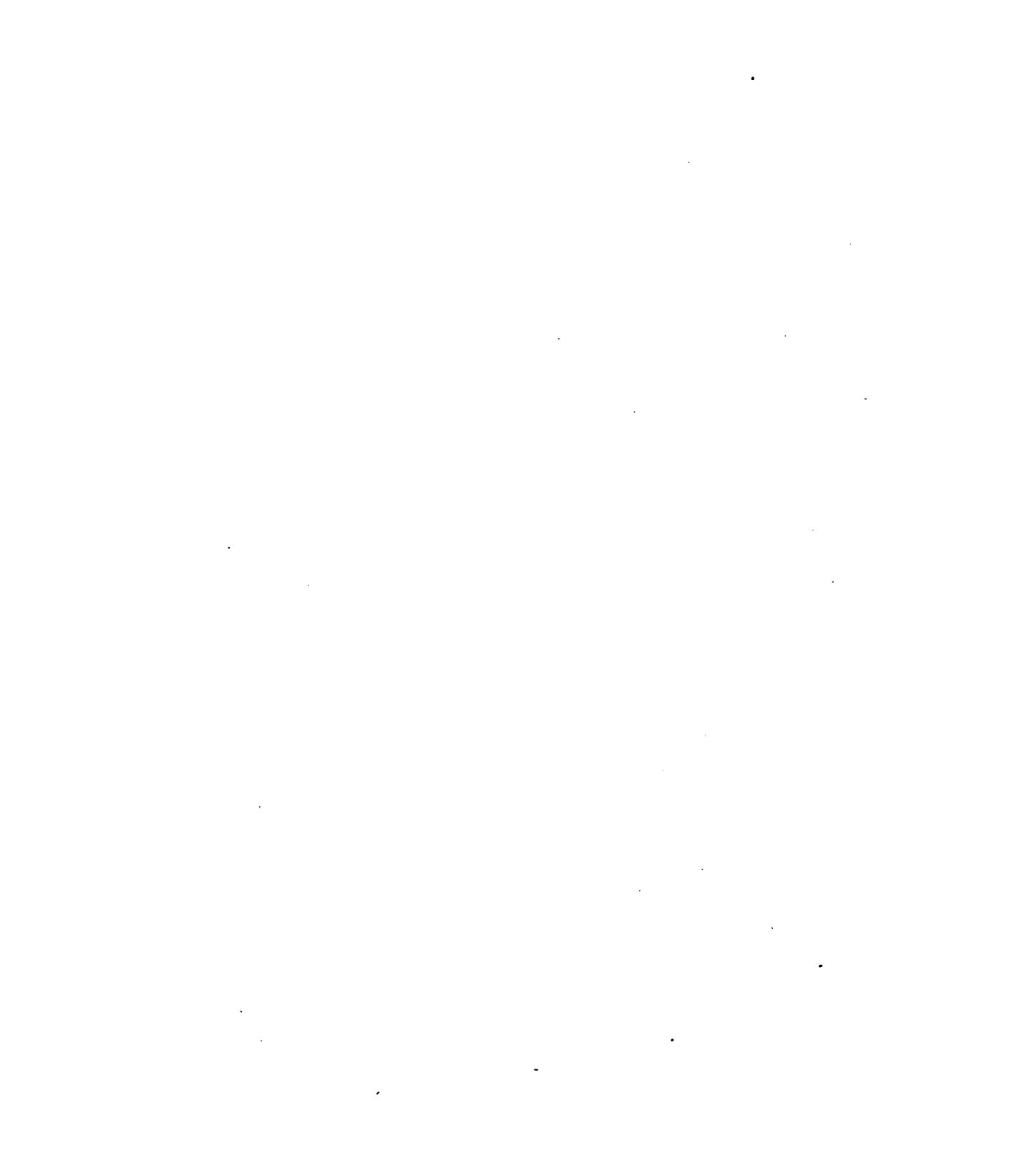
THE evening in the Kellers' pleasure-grounds passed off very agreeably ; and, indeed, Florence thought that she had seldom spent one so pleasant. It was a very large family gathering, consisting, in great part, of many young people from five to five-and-twenty, besides their parents and a few intimate friends. And the much-beloved and venerated Grossvater was amongst them all, the encourager of every sport, and apparently the happiest of the whole party. Lulu led him about from one spot to the other, and her friend Sophia was generally seen with them, too, in spirits which more nearly approached to what hers used to be than she had been known to show for many a long day ; while Maxwell got Florence and Annie to join in the most active of all the games. And after they were all thoroughly tired out, the company were collected on the lawn to listen to a very good performance of music from one of the best bands in the town ; after which the guests separated into little knots, and either stood conversing on the lawn or rambled away into the prettiest parts of the neighbouring orchards and meadows.

Maxwell, with his friend Edwin Withers, his sister Florence, and Fräulein Schmidt, followed the latter example, and rambling away into one of the most retired spots were soon deep in an interesting argument ; which, though it began by a mere discussion



regarding the merits of certain figures of the Emperors, which are to be seen under a lime-tree, said to be 700 years old, which stands in front of the Castle, and especially one beautiful one of the Emperor Wenceslaus, soon branched off into more serious subjects. Their walk was therefore rather a long one, and most of the guests had departed when the four returned to the central encampment on the lawn ; while Lulu was just leading the old grandfather away into the house. But there was an unusual cloud on his brow which surprised them all ; and it seemed to have communicated itself to Herr Keller and his wife, and one or two of the other elders of the party still remaining. No explanation could, however, be obtained ; nor was anything to be learnt that night, except that another great family gathering was fixed for the next evening ; but that this one was not to be anything like a fête,





and that none but relatives were to be present, and those guests who were staying in the house.

At the appointed hour, therefore, all the Warringtons proceeded, in much curiosity, to the large hall which had been named ; and there at the head of it, in an immense arm-chair, known as the Grossvater stühl, sat the aged grandfather, looking both stern and sad. All round the room, in order of age or rank, were ranged his own children, with their husbands and wives ; while below them again came their children, some grown up, while others were mere infants. Seats were placed for the guests, and then the word 'Albert !' was uttered in a loud voice by the aged head of the house ; and while they were wondering what was about to happen, a poor lady near to Florence burst into tears, as her son, a tall and very unprepossessing-looking youth, of about nineteen years of age, left her side, and white as ashes, and trembling like an aspen leaf, slowly paced up the hall, and stood with his head hanging down in front of the old gentleman.

From the long and severe reproof which the latter administered, Florence gathered that the young man had been exceedingly idle at College, and a disgrace to his family ; and that he was, moreover, in debt. It was a scene never to be forgotten, and one calculated, if anything could, to make an impression on a good-for-nothing youth ; for the old grandsire spoke not only of temporal disgrace and punishment, but also, in impressive and earnest language, he dwelt on the youth's fearful waste of what in another hour might no longer be his—on his sin in the sight of God, and on the danger he stood of incurring His endless wrath ; while he drew to a close more tenderly, his voice faltering as he besought the guilty lad to think on his ways, and then concluded by pointing him to 'the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.'

‘Does this sort of thing take place frequently?’ Florence asked of Lulu, who wept bitterly as she left the hall.

‘It is an old custom, that was once in general use,’ was her answer; ‘but only a few families still practise it, which makes it even more terrible. But grandfather will not give it up, because he says that he has known it have such good effects.’

All this happened quite at the end of summer, which that year was a very long one. Almost immediately afterwards the weather became suddenly cold, and before another month had elapsed our party began to think that they might proceed to Venice.

After a long consultation, it was at length agreed that they should go by train to Innspruck, resting a couple of days at Augsburg on their way, and also a few hours at Munich to see something of that city. From Innspruck to Botzen they would have to travel post through the pass of Brenner, after which they would proceed by rail straight on to Venice.

We cannot pause here to satisfy our readers’ possible curiosity as to the result of this little stay in Augsburg, which indeed Maxwell had visited more than once during their residence at Nuremberg, but shall reserve that for a future occasion.

Sophia proceeded, even now, reluctantly on her way, so much attached had she become to her German friend; but most of the others no sooner heard the plan proposed than they became eager to proceed.

They arrived at Botzen on a Saturday night, and soon perceived by the falling off in the matter of cleanliness, as well as by the partial use of the Italian language, that, though still in Germany, they were, notwithstanding, approaching Italy.

The town presented a very lively and picturesque appearance,

as it happened to be market-day, when the peasants from various parts of the Tyrol come crowding in ; and before reaching Botzen they had watched with interest the change of vegetation, and remarked fig, lemon, orange, mulberry, olive, and pomegranate trees scattered about, according to the varied aspects and situations of the plantations.

It was disappointing to have to pass Trent, once the most flourishing city of the Tyrol, and celebrated for the great congress known as the Council of Trent, which sat for eight years, and definitely settled the Romish articles of belief. And then, all round Trent is the district for wine and silk ; and a large part of the population are employed in rearing the silk-worm. But, as Martin observed, 'the more places they passed the quicker they would be in Venice, where there would be more fun than they had had yet.'

It was a fine warm evening, late in the autumn, when they arrived in the city of the Doges. A crowd of gondolas, instead of omnibuses, were waiting to convey the passengers to the various hotels ; and as the train stopped, Maxwell put his head out and looked earnestly about him. Then, suddenly drawing in again, he exclaimed,—

'Hallo, Newton! why, how comes it that you never told us this? Here's your friend the Professor! What a shame that you didn't give us notice that you expected him!'

'Mr. Lucan! Hurrah!' exclaimed the lad, without taking any notice of these interrogatories. 'That's grand! that's glorious!'

And Newton and Martin at the same time put their heads out and cheered lustily, while their salute was almost as heartily returned by the young man, who was standing up in a gondola that was bearing immediately down towards them, and into which they were all speedily transferred.

It was an elegant, cushioned gondola, of a black colour, like all the rest ; and most delicious was the short voyage to the Albergo Reale hotel, on the Riva dei Schiavoni, which was once the Nani-Mocenigo Palace, and is only a short distance from the ducal palace.

But Mr. Warrington had been too much of a traveller to take up his abode there for any length of time without a regular agreement beforehand about charges ; and as this required some little calculation on his part he first merely called for refreshments, to be ready in an hour's time, during which interval the three young men (for Mr. Withers had accompanied them), with Florence, Annie, and the boys, walked out for a stroll on the Quay ; and Martin, whose spirits seemed to require some vent, began to sing, or rather to chant :—

“ There is a glorious city in the sea ;
The sea is in the broad, the narrow streets,
Ebbing and flowing ; and the salt sea-weed
Clings to the marble of her palaces.”

‘ By-the-bye, what splendid red marble that bit is made of !

“ No track of men, no footsteps to and fro,
Lead to her gates. The path lies o’er the sea,
Invisible : and from the land we went,
As to a floating city—steering in,
And gliding up her streets, as in a dream,
So smoothly, silently—by many a dome,
Mosque-like, and many a stately portico,
The statues ranged along an azure sky :
By many a pile, in more than Eastern pride,
Of old the residence of merchant-kings ;
The fronts of some, tho’ Time had shattered them,
Still glowing with the richest hues of art,
As though the wealth within them had run o’er.”



‘ There, now ! who says I haven’t got a memory ? I don’t understand, though, what it means by the sea being in the streets.’

‘ You’ll soon see,’ returned Lucan, laughing. He, too, seemed to be in higher spirits than usual. ‘ Venice is built on seventy-two little islands, and the sea runs in between them like natural canals. The shoals outside are called the Lagunes. I wonder if my little cousin Annie can tell us how a city ever came to be built on a number of such small islands ?’

‘ I think so,’ replied Annie, ingenuously ; ‘ because I had been reading a little about it before we came. Wasn’t it the fugitives who were fleeing from Attila the Hun who first settled here ?’

‘ Perfectly right, my little woman : and now, in what year ? Can you recollect that ?’

‘ Oh, dear, no ! I never can remember dates,’ said Annie, quickly.

‘ Well, it was in A. D. 421 that a little town first rose on the isle called Rialto, of which we shall see a good deal. Then other little towns sprung up on the other islands, and, at first, each had its own government. By-and-bye, however, the fear of their enemies led them to unite ; and in A. D. 697 they elected their first Doge.’

‘ Dear me, Walter !’ cried Maxwell. ‘ Are you going to play the guide again for us ? You seem very much *au fait* about everything.’

‘ Because,’ replied Lucan, ‘ when I was not much more than a boy, I once spent seven or eight months here ; so I believe that I could act in the capacity to which you refer, should that be your pleasure. Only I must first poke about a little myself and see that I have not forgotten my way in the streets.’

‘ It is with this palace, is it not,’ interposed Edwin Withers, ‘ that the story of the Doge Marino Faliero is connected ?’

‘Yes: you know the story, of course?’

‘Not well enough to repeat it; so perhaps you will favour us for the benefit of our juniors, two of whom, I understand, are literally thirsting for knowledge!’

‘It was in the middle of the 14th century,’ said Walter, ‘that this man was elected Doge—which, in fact, meant “absolute monarch,” for there was no appeal from his sentences: he was commander-in-chief, and nobody knows what besides. An old chronicle says that after his election, when he was about to land, a thick haze came on, which forced him to land at the place of St. Mark, just between the two columns where criminals are executed. And every one thought this a bad omen. It is said, also, that on the day of a certain procession the bishop delayed to come, which so enraged Faliero that he struck the reverend man. “*Therefore,*” the old chronicle continues, “Heaven allowed Faliero to go right out of his senses.”

‘At any rate, he had not been Doge ten months before he determined to make himself lord of Venice. And this is how he went to work.

‘There was a great bull-hunt, and afterwards a banquet, to which came Ser Michele Steno, who was poor and young, but crafty and daring. And this gentleman loved one of the damsels of the Duchess. Perhaps he would have been more prudent had he kept this secret; but it is said that he acted indiscreetly: so that the Duke ordered his esquires to kick him off the Solajo, which was accordingly done.

‘This was an affront which Ser Michele thought beyond all bearing, and, to revenge himself, he wrote some things afterwards, against both the Duke and Duchess, on the chair most commonly used by the Duke.

‘The scandal against the young Duchess put the Doge into a tremendous rage, and, by means of bribery, the culprit was soon discovered. But the Grand Council of Ten, either because he was young, or because they disliked the Doge, gave Ser Michele only a light sentence, which still more incensed Faliero.

‘Next day came on a quarrel between an angry gentleman and the Admiral of the palace, the latter of whom rushed to the Doge to complain of blows given and wounds received. On which the Doge asked what he would have, and desired him to think on the wrongs which he himself had suffered without getting any redress. To which the Admiral answered, that if he had the heart to make himself prince of all the land he would help him, if he liked, to cut the Council in pieces.

‘So they discussed and agreed on a plan ; but, happily for the Council, it was discovered in time, and something in the way that the Gunpowder Plot was found out. Some one in the scheme went and told Ser Niccolo Lioni, who was at first struck almost dead at the news, but soon took very prompt measures ; for he first secured his informant, and then went and told some of his friends ; and when they were sure that the story was quite true they sent for certain trusty persons to go to the houses of the ringleaders,—shut the gates of the palace, and forbade the ringing of the bells. And when the Council of Ten saw that the Doge was in the plot they took twenty noble counsellors, who all arrived at dead of night, to counsel but not to vote. Next they sent for the Doge and the other conspirators, who were all examined, and then sentenced to be hanged to the red pillars of the balcony of the palace, from which the Doge was used to look at the bull-fights—all but the Doge himself, who was to be beheaded ; which was done about noon. You may see an inscription up in the palace now to this effect.

‘That is the whole of the terrible story, which is made even more gloomy by the secrecy with which everything was done. Two days after a new Doge was elected, and no questions were asked.’

‘And this was all done here?’ said Annie, looking at the magnificent building and shuddering.

‘Yes,’ said Maxwell; ‘and we must get a peep inside as soon as we can, and see the old council-chamber, and the wonderful golden staircase of which I was telling you: but not just now, for I’m sure that dinner must be waiting.’

So saying he put his hand within his cousin’s arm, and the two walked on in front, talking rather earnestly about something which, as Martin observed, seemed to prevent them from looking at anything.



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THE GOLDEN STAIRCASE.



CHAPTER VII.

‘Isn’t it glorious, mamma,’ said Martin at dinner, ‘that cousin Walter has come here, too? We shall get on twice as well with a guide of our own.’

‘A thousand thanks for the delicate compliment,’ returned his cousin. ‘But if you mean to make me useful you must be quick about it; for I haven’t the chance of staying as long as you are going to be here, you must remember. It was a little business partly which brought me here, and as soon as that is finished I go on to Florence.’

‘What a bore business is!—isn’t it?’ remarked Maxwell, leaning both elbows over the back of his chair, and chuckling a good deal; ‘and yours in particular. I’m sure you must find it so!’

But this remark received no other answer than an indignant glance, and even Martin’s persistence in his former inquiry seemed to relieve him, although Mrs. Warrington’s reply to it was evidently constrained.

‘Why, what in the world is this?’ exclaimed Mr. Warrington, starting up and going to the window: ‘a fog in Venice! I never heard of such a thing!’

‘They are not uncommon, I assure you; though it is a singular time of day for one,’ replied Walter. ‘We used to be dreadfully annoyed by them in the autumn, as well as by the

mosquitoes. I fear that you have not chosen the best season for your visit.'

'That is vexing!' answered Mr. Warrington. 'I suppose that we should have come a month later?'

'Well, the winters are sometimes intensely cold. I liked it best in spring.'

'How excessively provoking!' cried almost every one at once, while Walter continued,—

'But I hope that you have got into a favourable quarter, at any rate. There is one much worse than other parts for the nightly plagues, but it is so many years since I was here that I cannot remember which that was. It was very stupid of me not to think of this, as I might have inquired before you arrived or struck your bargain.'

'A very excusable omission, considering your troublesome business, though,' returned Maxwell, with a twinkle in his eye.

And this time it was Florence who turned the conversation, by asking 'whether they had not better take lessons in Italian at Venice, as they had in German at Stuttgart and Nuremberg?'

'Not of a Venetian, at any rate, I should think,' returned her brother, quickly. 'They drop all their consonants here, you know; and their language is as different as possible from the pure Italian.'

'All!' repeated Martin, laughing. 'What watery sort of stuff it must be, then!'

But his father remarked,—

'A better imitation than the Neapolitan, at any rate. Why, some have regretted that it did not prevail instead of the Tuscan. In fact, I believe the Venetian language is very like the Venetian painting,—soft and beautiful, though perhaps not so forcible as the pure Italian.'

‘Martin will not be sorry to be excused the lessons, I’ll be bound,’ remarked his elder brother: but that young gentleman, who was getting rather tired of being dubbed a dunce by all the family, interrupted his speech by rushing to the window and crying out,—

‘Hallo! what have we here? Punch, I declare! Why, I thought that was an English affair entirely.’

‘A take-off of the English, or else of the French, I have no doubt, whenever you see it on the Riva dei Schiavoni. Italians are very fond of Punch; but they enjoy it at our expense. Look out there in that corner—that is another of their diversions,’ answered Walter.

‘What? I see nothing but a man talking to a small crowd,’ said Newton.

‘He is telling them a story. Don’t you see how that sentimental-looking youth is rubbing his eyes, and how that girl wipes hers with her sleeve? I dare say you will often see conjurers here also; for, I believe, this is the street for all these amusements.’

It was a fine, clear morning, next day; but some of our party, who had been kept awake a great part of the night by hundreds of small stinging foes, were glad to rest after daylight. Martin and his cousin Newton, on each of whom they had made, to use their own expression, ‘fearful ravages,’ preferred, however, to rise and look about them.

They came in at breakfast-time in a particularly noisy and excited state of mind, and eager to ‘get inside some of those gorgeous palaces’ that very day.

‘We must get a gondola, then; and you may summon one, if you please, in about an hour’s time,’ answered their father, smiling. ‘I suppose you begin to suspect that Venice is a fine city?’

'*Rather!*' answered Newton, emphatically. 'Why, it's made up of palaces and churches, as far as I can see!'

'Of course it is, young man,' said Walter, who had followed him into the room. 'Why, didn't you know that long ago? I didn't think you were so ignorant.'

'What do you want with a gondola, uncle?' asked Newton, who was rather huffed at this remark. 'We can walk all about the town, though it is full of canals; for there are more than three hundred bridges, they say.'

'Nevertheless, I should prefer a gondola,' returned his uncle, 'both on account of the ladies and because we shall get a better view from the water. We will go up the Grand Canal and see the Ponte Rialto and the Foscari Palace.'

'And we will row the gondola, Newton and I, papa; we watched the men doing it just now, and it's as easy as anything.'

But the gondoliers objected to this arrangement. They did not consider that the art of manœuvring these long affairs, to which they had devoted their lives, could be practised by unskilled boys; and thus the fears of the ladies were set at rest.

Being a large party they had employed two men, who rowed standing at the extreme end of the gondola, and wore red caps and girdles, though they took these off immediately their company had entered.

'Oh!' exclaimed Annie, 'what did they do that for? They looked so picturesque.'

'Don't you see that other gondola coming towards us?' said her cousin Walter. 'The men in that belong to the other party, and would soon teach these fellows better manners if they did such a disrespectful thing as to keep on their caps when we are on board.'

‘Is it considered disrespectful?’ Annie replied. ‘I did not know that there were two parties among the gondoliers!’

‘Oh, dear, yes! and have been for centuries; one for one side of the great canal and city, and the other for the other side. Our men are Castellani, and those are Nicoletti; one being aristocratic and the other democratic in their feelings: and a deadly feud has always existed between them. I was once in a gondola when I was only a lad, and my poor gondolier got half killed, I remember, by a lot of Nicoletti, who attacked him with their oars because he had omitted this mark of deference to his young passenger.’

‘I say!’ cried Maxwell, from the other end of the boat, ‘can’t we have a song? It would sound well over the water; and I hate lectures, Walter, when we’re out pleasuring.’

‘And so do I,’ added Martin, almost involuntarily, and very warmly.

‘No doubt, no doubt, my dear fellow,’ answered his elder brother. ‘We have not the smallest doubt in the world of that. Come, what shall it be?’

“Row, brothers, row!” What do you say to that?’ asked Florence.

‘Too stale, a great deal, my dear: for pity’s sake, think of something better.’

‘Well, then, what do you say to “Rule Britannia! Britannia rules the waves?”’ said Edwin Withers, who was one of the party, and who was seated just below Florence.

‘Oh, not at all the sort of thing to be singing abroad. It would be bad taste anywhere, but worst of all at Venice,’ answered Maxwell.

‘What *do* you mean, brother?’ asked Annie, whose eagerness

for information overcame all that nervousness which might have prevented her from asking questions before so many persons.

‘What do I mean, Annie?’ he said. ‘Why, only that as Venice was mistress of the sea before our time, and used to send out the most magnificent fleets from the arsenal of the old Doge’s palace, it would hardly be generous to remind her that other people have stepped into her shoes.’

‘What, destroyed her naval power?’ asked Newton.

‘The same thing, I believe, which injured Nuremberg so much. I mean the discovery of the passage to India round the Cape, which turned trade in another direction. I don’t suppose you would find more than ten vessels now, where you would have found hundreds; and those ten, probably, would not be finished. But what about our song? Here are you, Edwin, with your magnificent tenor, Walter with his baritone, and I with my passable bass, to say nothing of our enchanting trebles; and yet nobody will raise a note!’

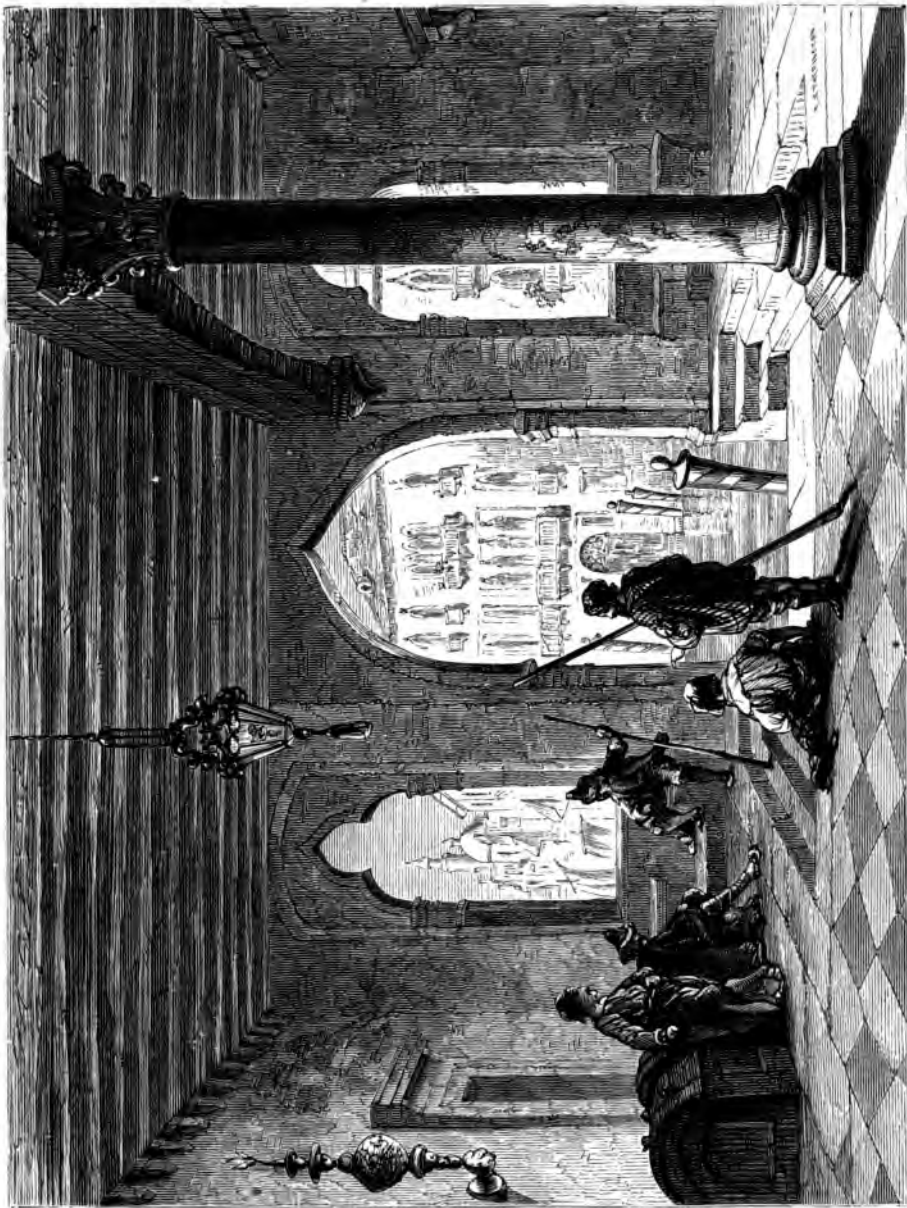
‘Let us have “Beautiful Venice,”’ said his mother. ‘You all know it; and what could be more appropriate?’

‘Excellent!’ cried Maxwell. ‘We’re highly indebted, mother, for your suggestion. Come, good folks, begin.’

So Florence began the solo; then she and her sister sang the next verse, as they sometimes did, as a duet; and all joined in at last in a sort of extempore chorus, their spirits being too high to think about trifles; and the music sounded very sweet over the waters.

Very soon they were passing the Doge’s palace, and as they approached a certain bridge the gondoliers rested on their oars, and said something which only Edwin Withers caught.

‘The famous “Bridge of Sighs,”’ he repeated. ‘How many poor wretches have passed over this to their death!’



THE PALAZZO FOSCARI, VENICE.

‘What, always to death?’ said Annie, shuddering.

‘I believe so. It led from the council chamber, in which the judges always wore masks, to the prison, and, once over, the victims were conducted down to the water’s edge, where the fatal red barque was awaiting them. It was all as secret as possible, for when that was seen no gondolier dared approach with his boat. For one minute the poor wretch would see again the blue sky over his head, and breathe the sweet, fresh air; and then he was laid down under cover, and carried to the deep canal Orfano, where “fishers were forbidden to cast their nets,” and whose muddy waters soon received his corpse.’

‘I’m glad I didn’t live in Venice then,’ said Annie. ‘It must have been horrid to be tried by men in masks.’

‘And they called themselves a free republic!’ said Newton, indignantly. ‘Is Venice free now?’

‘No,’ replied his uncle; ‘she belongs to Austria now, but much against her will. I hope we shall see a change some day.’

‘They certainly were not free under the Grand Council, from the Doge to the beggar, as this old palace of the Foscari, which we are approaching, could testify,’ added Walter. ‘I suppose that my friend Newton can favour us with the story of “the two Foscari?”’

‘I don’t believe I can, though I know something about it,’ answered Newton, bluntly. ‘Besides, I’d much rather that somebody else should tell it.’

‘Come, Mr. Professor, you’re the right person,’ interposed Mr. Warrington. ‘Be so good as to favour us.’

‘Well, if I must,’ said Walter, shrugging his shoulders. ‘It was in the year 1441 that Giacomo Foscari, the son of Francesco Foscari, the Doge who had bought the palace, celebrated his marriage with a young lady of high birth. He was both brave

and handsome, and consequently a great favourite with the people. Few weddings have been more magnificent, I suppose; for St. Mark's place was converted into an arena, and splendid fêtes were given for ten days, to about 40,000 people.

' But some few years after the poor fellow was accused before the Council of a most heinous crime in the eyes of Venetian judges, namely, the receiving of a large present from the Duke of Milan.

' His own father had to preside at the trial, and, moreover, was obliged, not only to command the application of the "question," but to assist in these tortures, which were applied without mercy. Afterwards, seated on his ducal throne, and surrounded by the terrible Ten, he had to pronounce the sentence of perpetual banishment.

' Giacomo was to go to Naples, but afterwards was permitted to come to Trevisa, on condition of showing himself every day to the governor of the town. But this vicinity to Venice proved his ruin; for a member of the Council having been murdered, the unfortunate man was accused of the crime, again put to horrid tortures, and banished to Candia. There he had the imprudence to entreat the intercession of the Duke of Milan on his behalf—another dreadful crime in the eyes of the state; and the letter being intercepted, a galley was actually sent to fetch him home to be tortured a third time, after which a year's imprisonment was added to his exile.

' Permission to take leave of his family was all the mercy shown him, and to his last entreaties his own father, watched by so many wretches, had to turn a deaf ear. Giacomo was sent back to Candia, and a year after the true murderer was discovered; but too late, for the unfortunate young man had just died in prison. That was the end of the son.

' The poor old father, broken down by trouble, at length offered

his resignation to the Council; but it was refused. He was obliged to continue living in splendid slavery, an instance of which I will tell you. A madman had once attempted his life, and, in spite of the entreaties of the Doge, he was tortured and executed in his presence. In fact, he had to superintend the execution. The poor old Doge lived among enemies, who delighted thus to enslave and torment him; and one of these was one of the Ten who still nourished "*la vendetta*," that is, an old family hatred, though the Doge, wishing to end this warfare, had offered his daughter in marriage to a member of his family: but she was disdainfully refused.

' At last he unfortunately said, that "as long as there were any Loredanos it would be impossible to govern;" and a few days after Admiral Loredano died suddenly, and his brother shortly afterwards. The son of the former then wrote down in his note-book of debts, "The Doge, for the death of my father and uncle." To carry out his revenge he got himself elected a member of the Ten, then of the Three; and intrigued among his companions until he obtained from them a sentence for the deposition of Foscari.

' One day only was allowed the old man, for the very next day he and all his family had to leave the palace. The people, with whom he was popular, assembled in the Piazza to escort him in triumph to his gondola; but from the gallery of the palace the crowd were ordered to disperse, "*under pain of death!*"

' Eight days after another Doge was elected; and when the great bell sounded to announce the fact, the old man came out of his room to assure himself that his ears had not deceived him; and there, as if struck by lightning, he fell dead, at the age of eighty-four years.

‘ Then Loredano, hearing of the circumstance, wrote in his notebook, “ He has paid ! ” ’

‘ Oh, dear, dear, what a city of horrors we have come to ! ’ exclaimed Annie.

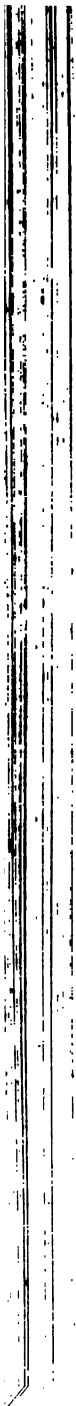
But her father said,—‘ Not *only* of horrors. Let us go on to the famous Rialto, where all the business of the place is done, and has been done, from time immemorial ; and then we will turn and go into the Lagune to see this famous regatta which is coming off.’

‘ We shall be too soon for that, sir,’ said Walter Lucan. ‘ It is not to come off until two, and it is now only twelve. Allow me to suggest that we should go first into some of the smaller canals—the Bernardo, for instance. There is one of the most curious things to be seen there, I remember,—an ancient staircase, which is very light and open, and *outside* the palace Minelli. We can see, too, the Bianco Capello palace, which, I remember, I used greatly to admire.’

‘ Ah, that’s the palace at which young Miss Bianca used to stand at her window and talk across the canal to young Mr. Pietro Bonaventuri, who lived at his uncle’s house opposite !—isn’t it ? ’ said Maxwell, laughing. ‘ Let me see : they made a runaway match of it at last, I think, and had to hide in Florence and work for their living, till the Grand Duke, Francesco Medici, happened to get a sight of the pretty girl, and then he somehow or other got rid of Pietro and married her himself. Isn’t that the story, Walter ? ’

‘ Something like it,’ answered his cousin : ‘ but, as we are going to see a regatta, I wonder which of us can tell anything of their history. You’ve seen regattas in England ; but they are very little like what you will witness presently. Come, Master Martin, this is something in your line. Can’t you favour us ? ’





‘No,’ said Martin. ‘How is it to be expected that I should know anything about them before I’ve seen one? I’ll write you an account afterwards, and you may publish it, if you will; but at present I’m afraid we shall have to trouble you again, Mr. Professor.’

‘Speak for yourself, sir,’ said his father: ‘for I believe that I can oblige you this time, though I have not seen one—unless you prefer that any one else should tell it.’

‘Oh, papa, how could we?’ said Annie.

‘Well,’ answered her father, ‘I don’t mean to tell you that I know when the first gondola was built, nor who built it, any more than I know when the first two or three gondolas began to run races; but there was a particular occasion when these races were first put into the rank of authorised public amusements, and this it was which made the distinction between the Venetian regatta and the English or French ones, to which your cousin alludes. Ours are nothing more than a sort of watering-place amusement; but these are to the Venetians what the Olympic games were to the Greeks—they are a great national institution.’

‘As it was the custom on feast-days to go in procession to the Lido, the government took care always to have ready a certain number of gondolas, which, put in rank in a line, started at a given signal; from whence the word “riga”—a rank, or line, and so, in time, “regatta.” Well, there was also another established old custom in Venice, which was, that all the members of the nobility who wished to marry did so on one day of the year, and at one church; and every year the state endowed a certain number of young ladies—twelve, I believe; the conditions being that they should be beautiful but poor; and every one was ready to lend the brides their jewels for that day.’

‘ It was in the year A.D. 944 that the pirates, who were at war with Venice, attracted by so rich a prize, came and hid themselves close by the church ; and then, when every one was assembled, they rushed in, fully armed, among the unarmed multitude, and carried off the brides in the very face of their helpless bridegrooms.

‘ But the Doge then reigning was a brave and spirited man. Instantly he caused these gondolas to be prepared, put himself at the head of the enraged youths, who lost no time in arming themselves and giving chase to the pirates, whom they soon came up with, and, after a sharp contest, entirely defeated. They recovered their brides, and returned in triumph with them to the city ; and a great massacre of the pirates followed.

‘ An annual fête was established to commemorate this deliverance of the young ladies ; and the Council, seeing how useful this exercise with the oars was likely to be to the commonwealth, added the regatta to the other public games, and so in time it became the favourite amusement of the Venetians. The boats take a long course, do they not, Lucan ?’

‘ Yes : about four Venetian miles. Beginning at the eastern end of the town, they traverse the whole length of the Riva, pass before the Piazza, enter the great canal, up which they go as far as to the Canareggio, where they turn and receive the prizes, in order of arrival, in front of the palace Foscari. So we must get out of the way in time, or we shall have to land where we may not wish to do so. The Piazza of St. Mark would be a good place for us to await them.

‘ It is the only square that Venice can boast,’ he added, as he handed Sophia out of the gondola ; ‘ and it is not a very large one, as you see : nevertheless, one may fancy one’s self almost anywhere as one stands here ; for the spoils of so many places have

been brought to Venice, and it contains besides many excellent imitations of other old works. I say, Withers,' he added, turning suddenly round, 'what's o'clock? My watch has stopped to-day!'

But Edwin Withers had gone on in front with Florence. The boys, of course, had landed before any one else, and had dragged Annie on shore with them; and Mr. and Mrs. Warrington and Maxwell were also some distance ahead: for Sophia had caught her dress on something in getting out of the boat, which had caused some delay. So they had to hasten after the others, and Walter, surprised at Sophia's briskness, began to congratulate her on her increase of strength.

'The boats will not be round here just now,' he added; 'but I have a particular reason for wishing to be at the rendezvous by two o'clock.'

So they hastened on and soon came up with the others, Mrs. Warrington looking extremely annoyed when she discovered that Sophia had not been, as she had supposed, in front with the others. Walter perceived it, and truly guessed the cause; namely, her great dread lest either of her daughters should do as his father had done—make a match beneath the dignity of her family: nor could he help smiling to himself when he thought how soon, as he hoped, all her fears, from one quarter at least, would be set at rest.

And now they all stood before that wonderful front of St. Mark's Church, the present cathedral of the city, supposed by the Romanists to contain the remains of the Evangelist himself, which, they say, were removed there from Alexandria, A.D. 828.

It would be hard to say who fell into the greatest ecstasy over that beautiful façade: one admired the colours of the marble, so different from anything English; another, one part of the architecture; and a third, the whole general effect: but Annie had

finished her survey first, her attention being attracted by a large flock of pigeons, who were hovering about the Piazza and the neighbouring buildings. She tried in vain to get Newton to join her in her chase after some of them, until the great clock of the Torre dell' Orologio sounded the hour of two; at which sound all the birds began to arrive from every side, and to congregate in one spot. Then Walter's call to look what was going to happen seconded hers, and every one was amused to see that the birds had come to be fed, understanding the signal as well as their feeders.

'You see they are something like our storks,' said Walter. 'The Venetians are as fond of these birds as we are of them, and have protected them from time immemorial.'

'So I suppose you have all seen enough of Venice already to prevent you from wondering that Titian preferred this city, as a place of residence, to any other?' said Mr. Warrington.

'I thought he *was* a Venetian!' replied Newton, looking surprised.

'Born in the Venetian states, but not in Venice,' said his uncle: 'he was a pupil of Giovanni Bellini, then the greatest painter of Venice. Do you know the story of Titian's dropping his pencil, and its being picked up by the Emperor Charles V., his patron, who said; as he gave it him back, "Titian is worthy of being served by Cæsar?"'

'The Tintoretto was one of his pupils—wasn't he?' said Sophia.

'Yes,' said Walter; 'and dismissed by him out of jealousy. His real name was James Robusti, you know; and the other is a surname given him on account of his style. Sometimes he was called the "furious Tintoretto," because he was so rapid and bold;

and his countrymen say that he had three pencils, one of gold, another of silver, and a third of iron, because his productions are so unequal.'

'Marco Polo was a Venetian, too,—wasn't he?' said Martin.

'Yes; but he wasn't a painter, my dear fellow,' returned his brother.

'Don't tease the boy, Maxwell,' said his father, in a low tone. 'You really do him a great deal of harm.'

'Yes he was, old fellow,' said Walter, encouragingly. 'Do you know anything about him?'

'He was a great discoverer,' returned Martin—'the first European who visited China; and his father and uncle had been great travellers before him. He lived in the 13th century, I think, and got taken prisoner once by the Genoese, who were then at war with Venice: in prison he wrote a history of his adventures, which he sent to a fellow-prisoner, and afterwards had translated into French. It makes a capital book on geography, I've heard.'

'And you like people of Marco Polo's sort, don't you?' continued Walter.

'Yes; better than all your dry stay-at-homes,' returned Martin, bluntly.

'Then I hope Sebastian Cabot is another of your heroes—another Venetian discoverer, you know, and the son of a navigator also. He found out Newfoundland and Brazil; and he was such a favourite with the Duke of Somerset, that he made him grand pilot of England. But you don't care for poor Galileo, of course; for he only sat at home studying the stars, and inventing the thermometer and the telescope?'

'Ah, but I like him for all that!' said Martin; 'because he was so abominably treated.'

'Was he?' said Annie. 'How?'

‘ Why, don’t you know ? He made out that the world is round and moves, and that the sun is the centre of the universe, and not the earth ! So they had him up to Rome, burned his book, and put him in prison till he would say that it was not true, and that he was sorry he wrote it. He was a great coward to do it, though ; but don’t you know, when he got up from his knees afterwards he whispered to a friend, “ It moves for all that ? ” Hallo ! There come the boats, I say ! ’

CHAPTER VIII.

THAT first fortnight at Venice was a busy time, indeed ; for while Walter Lucan was with his cousins they were determined to make the most of his assistance ; and he certainly was in a more excited state, and more disposed to race them about from place to place, than he had been at Strasburg.

At length, however, the receipt of a certain letter, for which he had been looking, as he explained to Mrs. Warrington, obliged him instantly to proceed to Florence ; and, heartily wishing that they were to accompany him there, all the young people went to see him off next morning by the canal-boat, which was to take him to Ravenna, from whence he would have to hire a vehicle on to Forli, where the diligence for Florence was to be met.

Then the whole party went steadily to work, and, at least with one exception, were soon very busy : some in studying the history and various beauties of the numerous works of art to which they had access ; others in making copies of them, either in pencil or in water-colours ; and all becoming more and more enthusiastic in proportion as they became better acquainted with the wonders of that marvellous city.

The restless Martin, indeed, declared that he got on much quicker than the others with his discoveries. He loved roaming about, in and out through the narrow streets, and over the bridges,

or in a gondola up and down every one of the canals, or out on the lagunes, besides making frequent excursions beyond the bounds of the city ; and thus he certainly acquired a particular kind of information much more rapidly than most of the others, and was a good specimen of that sort of travellers, so common in these railway days, who think it right and proper to get over as much ground as possible in a given time, but who come back with very little more useful knowledge than that with which they started.

There was, however, some excuse for Martin at that time, as he was a perfect martyr to the mosquitoes, whose nightly ravages did not tend to calm or tranquilise his mind. These were, indeed, a great drawback to the enjoyment of most of the family, as were also the frequent fogs, which at times kept Mr. Warrington quite a prisoner in the house ; and when this was the case it was always a disappointment to Annie and the boys, because he had not only so extensive a stock of information, but so happy a knack of communicating it, that their visits to old churches and palaces were always, as they said, 'twice as good fun when he was with them.'

Sophia had by this time almost regained her former health and spirits. She was quite in her element again ; and her old eagerness for self-improvement had entirely returned. She was soon hard at work, under the best masters, for music and painting, that her father could procure for her ; and had besides already made many acquaintances among the English visitors at Venice ; and she was becoming more and more her mother's companion. But the old intimacy between her and Florence did not return. In fact, it was perfectly true, as she said, that just in proportion as she had become gayer, so had Florence grown more grave ; and yet of the two, the younger sister had really had far the greatest enjoyment during their tour. She had learnt much, thought much, and always found

plenty to do ; and though not even herself aware of how much she had gained, she was yet perfectly conscious that the last few months had been to her anything but wasted time.

Yet, for all that, Florence had a cross ; and a heavy one it was to one of so open and sociable a disposition as herself. She had begun to feel its weight at home ; but several reasons prevented her there from knowing its full burden. She was alone in her family ; the only one who had yet learnt to set the fear of God before her eyes, or to make the love of Christ the one constraining motive of action—the only one who really preferred heaven to earth, or who looked on earthly things in the light of eternity. And now that she was separated from the dear friend with whom, latterly, she had enjoyed such sweet and intimate communion, and debarred from the delightful and healthful excitement of that missionary work among her father's tenantry and their near neighbours, in which she had begun to take so hearty an interest, she felt this loneliness daily more and more. Perhaps, sometimes she allowed herself to dwell on it, and to be oppressed by it, even more than was right.

Yet she had tried, and did try as occasion offered, the effects of quiet talks and of gentle persuasion with Annie and the boys ; nor was she altogether without encouragement regarding them. Once or twice, too, she had made a strong effort to open her heart to her elder sister ; but here, as yet, with no success. With Maxwell she was the most at home ; and of late his great fondness for the company of his cousin, and of Edwin Withers, whom she once used always to hear spoken of as 'the serious boy,' or as 'the boy with no fun in him,' was certainly very cheering : for of the straightforward piety of both Walter and Edwin there could be no doubt.

The latter was shortly about to take orders ; but his health

had so broken down during his university course, that he was obliged to spend some time in recruiting it, and glad enough to meet with a companion. Still, Florence often wondered that he should so long have found the company of so worldly a family congenial enough to induce him to remain, while yet she hoped much from his example and from the earnest and prolonged conversations which he often had with her brother.

Her own refreshment and relief had been to write from time to time to both Miss Warner and her cousin, Susie Greville, to whom, as she was several years older than herself, she looked up very much as she would have done to an elder sister. And Susie, who knew well that, with all their refinement of taste, and many other attractive qualities, her uncle and aunt had not, as far as appeared, any interest in religious matters, could well enter into her young cousin's feelings, and not unfrequently strove to strengthen her by her sympathising, and yet encouraging letters.

'Work on and hope on among those nearest and dearest to you, dear Florie,' she wrote in a letter, which arrived about this time: 'and do let me ask you to be on your guard against appearing listless and indifferent about the many opportunities, both for enjoyment and improvement, which you now have, just because there is a higher enjoyment which is, as yet, denied you. The stones of the living temple are to be cut out without hands, you know. They are scattered here and there, sometimes in little groups, sometimes quite alone. If we are among these lively stones, our fellows must have a greater interest for us than anything else in this world; and when we find ourselves isolated it must be a trial. I dare say that in Venice, which is still under the Austrian yoke, you may not have met with a single one, though I doubt not that even there God has His hidden ones. In Florence,

which is free, and where I stayed some months lately, it is very different. There I heard the pure Gospel preached in one of the oldest of the palaces ; there I met many most excellent Christians, and found so much that was intensely interesting that I could, with pleasure, have stayed much longer. I wish you could go there for a while : but, from what you tell me, I am afraid there is no chance of that. It seems that just now, in one way, you are to be lonely ; in any case our comfort is, that when the cutting and polishing, which is going on without sound of chisel or hammer, is completed, the stones shall all be brought together ; and oh, what a temple will then be manifested before all the world !

‘ To visit Florence ! ’ How little did its namesake contemplate such a thing when she read this letter ! She had always wished it, even from a child ; but she did not know that, when Walter went away, Maxwell had been strongly inclined to accompany him, and had even proposed taking her with him. But this was exactly what Mrs. Warrington did not wish, especially as she understood that Mrs. Lucan was expected to join her son there shortly : and so, apparently, Maxwell had given up the point.

But another letter from Walter came, and then, though he did not even communicate the whole of its contents to Florence, he managed, as he generally did, to bring his mother round and get his own way.

‘ The Walkers, ’ wrote Lucan, ‘ who kept me so long hanging about Venice, then changed their plans—went back to Augsburg—out a little way and back again—never thinking that their whereabouts was a matter of the smallest concern to any mortal besides themselves—have at last really taken a suite of rooms in one of the inns here, and are expected to-morrow. If you have any curiosity to see them, why, rush over as fast as you can, for there is no

knowing how soon they may be off again. For my part, I shall be content with meeting somebody else whom I have not met for three long years. They seem, on the whole, to have been good to her; and as she gave notice to quit some time ago, why, they can't refuse to let her off a week or so sooner. My mother arrives to-night, I hope, and then she can be with her until we get the knot tied, which is to be done in as short a space of time as may be afterwards.

'Now, don't say anything about prudence and the like; the thing is settled: and what I ask of you is, that you and your kind sister, who have had so much to do with bringing about this happy termination to our heartaches, will both be present at our wedding. And I don't mean to take a nay!'

Maxwell brought this letter down to the gondola, which was to conduct them to the little Palace Ferro. He had not opened it before, and his sister was considerably amused at the curious expression of his countenance as he perused it; while his half-uttered, 'Many a slip 'twixt cup and lip, my good fellow,' excited her curiosity.

The beautiful Venetian Gothic of that fine building, and the picturesque effect of the blue-and-white posts which here, as in other parts of Venice, rise out of the water, ready for any gondolas to be fastened to, all got only half-admired in the discussion which followed when Maxwell made known his own determination, and pleaded for his sister's company. Nor could she help noticing that, when it was at length settled for both to go, Edwin Withers at once agreed to bear them company.

Our readers will now, perhaps, expect particulars of this visit; but my space will not allow me to do more than simply to state, that the time was one to which our young friend felt she should



always look back as one of the happiest in her life ; that everything turned out according to the wishes of all concerned ; that Mrs. Lucan proved to be one of the sweetest, most loving, and engaging Christian ladies whom Florence had ever met ; and that in her society she found just what she then most needed : while the fair-haired, pensive-looking Constance Morgan, with whom she had at Augsburg once spent a short half-hour, appeared to her, on further acquaintance, quite worthy of her cousin Walter, whose wife she had become before they left,—Florence, with her mother's consent, actually acting as bridesmaid.

The brother and sister thus made some acquaintance with the city of Dante and the Medici, but on their return they found themselves decidedly behind the others in their knowledge of Venice ; while, to their amazement, there was already some talk of shortly quitting that city, in which they had expected to spend the whole winter.

At Florence they had not been aware of the great change of weather : but now they found, that although the disagreeable fogs of Venice had taken their departure, yet that they had been succeeded by such intense frost and cold as they little expected in Italy, and that this as little agreed with their mother as the fogs had done with their father : in fact, that it was not pleasing to any one.

‘ We have made a mistake in coming here at all at this season,’ said Mr. Warrington. ‘ That is perfectly clear to me now ; and I am told, on all hands, that these winters are by no means uncommon ; and that, in fact, the spring is the season for visiting Venice. We should have had no mosquitoes then, they say ; and the air and climate are delicious. It is vexatious : but, for my part, I see no use in putting up much longer with this cold ; so the question is, where we shall go next.’

This question was soon settled by a very unexpected circumstance, which the next post, bringing a letter from England, communicated.

Mr. Warrington had a younger brother, who, for many years, had been in India, where he had married and amassed a large fortune. The climate had agreed remarkably well both with himself and his wife, and, having no children, he had not intended to return to his native land for some years. But a violent attack of fever at length prostrated his wife; and though some weeks had elapsed since her convalescence, she had not in any measure regained her health; nor would she do so, the doctors now declared, except by means of a sea voyage and a visit to her native land. The letter containing this intelligence had gone to England, and was now forwarded to Venice. It went on to say, that in about a month from the date of its arrival in England, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Warrington hoped to reach Suez, and that, should she then be in some degree recovered, they would probably rest awhile in Egypt before proceeding homeward.

On reading this intelligence Mr. Warrington immediately declared, and the whole party cordially consented to, his intention of being there to meet them.

CHAPTER IX.

‘GOOD-BYE, Venice!’ shouted Martin, as the little steamer which was to convey them to Trieste passed out of the lagune, and the sight of her palaces began to fade from their view. ‘Good-bye to all your “middle-age” greatness! We’re bound for a land old enough to be your great grandfather!’

But Martin was the only one inclined to make jokes, and Annie complained that the sun would make her eyes water.

Six hours carried them across the Adriatic; and they were all very shortly on board the fine English-built vessel which was to convey them to Alexandria.

‘We are off the coast of Illyria now,’ remarked Newton; ‘where the old queen Teuta lived, who wouldn’t prevent her subjects from committing piracies on the Romans, because it was an old custom of theirs, and their particular line of business: and soon we shall see the Ionian Isles. How grand that will be! I hope we may “run under Crete and put into the Fair Havens,” where St. Paul wanted the centurion to winter.’

‘And see Cape Matapan, the most southerly point of Europe,’ added Annie. ‘What a delicious voyage it will be! And none of us are ever ill at sea—that’s such a good thing!’

‘I want to get to Alexandria, though, as fast as possible,’

answered Newton ; ‘because there must be such a quantity to see in Egypt : and I know we shall go up the Nile, if there’s time, before spring comes, though uncle won’t say so. But it wouldn’t be nice to travel there when that hot wind that lasts fifty days prevails—the Khamseen, I mean.’

‘I wonder if you know who built Alexandria?’ said Mr. Warrington, who came up at this moment to the part of the deck where they were standing.

‘I do!’ said Newton, eagerly. ‘The site was chosen by Alexander the Great ; but the city was built by his general, Ptolemy Soter, its first Greek king, because Alexander died before he could build it.’

‘There was a great library there—wasn’t there, papa?’ said Annie ; ‘and I think it was mostly destroyed when Julius Cæsar blockaded the city.’

‘Yes, Annie,’ answered her father ; ‘and now we have named two powers who have, at different times, governed Egypt, the Greeks and Romans. Let us just run over the others.’

‘First, there were the old Pharaohs,’ said Annie, beginning to count on her fingers ; ‘but I don’t know who came after them.’

‘Oh, the Persians : don’t you remember about Cambyzes conquering it?’ said Newton. ‘Then came the Greeks, that is the Ptolemies, with queen Cleopatra to finish them ; then the Romans : but I don’t know any more.’

‘The Mahometan rule was the next,’ said his uncle. ‘Omar, the second caliph after Mahomet, drove out the Romans, and held the country until, in A.D. 1250, Saladin set up the military empire of the Mamelukes. Then, in the 16th century, a Turkish emperor conquered it ; and after that civil wars between the different beys prevailed, until Napoleon invaded the land. But

the French were driven out by the English ; and in 1811 Mehemet Ali became its master, by the massacre of the Mamelukes.'

'Mehemet Ali was a wonderful fellow,' remarked Maxwell. 'Think of his beginning life by keeping a small shop in Roumelia, and dying ruler of the land of Egypt ! or rather being able, shortly before his death, to hand it over to his son, and then to his grandson, Abbas Pasha. But I am getting hungry ; so, if you've all had history enough for to-day, I vote that we go down to dinner, which, I believe, that bell was intended to announce.'

A twelve-hours' voyage brought them to Ancona, where they stopped to take in passengers, and another twenty-eight to Brindisi, or old Brundisium, the scene of the death of Virgil ; and on the fourth day from leaving Brindisi they were informed that Alexandria was in sight. Eagerly then did each one strain his or her eyes for the first sight ; and, unconsciously, every one seemed to be looking for cliffs or hills, such as they had seen on most other shores : but none met their view. A sort of reddish vapour, caused probably by the action of a burning sun on the mouths of the river, and on the sand, was the first indication of land ; then the tops of a few scattered palm-trees became visible, and then a sandy plain, cut up by numerous canals, or what seemed to be, or to have been, canals ; and, lastly, the city of Alexandria itself, standing on what used to be the island of Pharos, though now it is only a peninsula.

Almost silently the whole party stepped on shore ; for it was a strange feeling that they were in Africa, and a stranger one still that they were in Egypt, the land of so many memories of past greatness, the earliest civilized, and once the greatest in the world. And the warm colouring spread over the landscape, the feathery palm-trees, the graceful minarets—intermingled, it is true, with modern and European houses, and, above all, the crowd of people,

of various nations that swarmed in the streets,—all these things were so new, and produced in every one such strange emotions, that no one was inclined to talk.

At length, a Fellah woman, wearing the odious face-veil, or rather nose-veil, happened to pass them, and so tickled Martin's fancy that he suddenly recovered the use of his tongue.

Then came a long string of camels, bearing skins of water on their backs, all led by one little boy; and Florence exclaimed,—

‘Oh, how they make one think of Abraham and all the old Bible people!’

‘Alexandria was not built in his time, nor even thought of though,’ remarked her father, laughing. ‘It is one of the great “middle-age” places after all, at least compared with what we understand by Egypt; for it was only founded in the fourth century before the Christian era, and one connects the idea of it with the great schools of philosophy in vogue, both just before and just after that date.’

‘Origen flourished here,’ said Maxwell; ‘and Athanasius.’

‘Aye, and it is generally thought, I believe, that St. Mark himself taught and preached in this city,’ said Withers. ‘In fact, he is said to have founded the church of Alexandria; and some say that he died here. Don’t you remember, Newton, how they pretend to have removed his remains to St. Mark’s at Venice?’

‘Ah! but Alexandria had passed the height of its greatness then,’ returned Newton; ‘because the Romans had so knocked it about, and spoilt its fine buildings.’

‘I expect, notwithstanding, that it looked very respectable until the Turks’ time,’ interposed his uncle: ‘they were the people for making real havoc!’

‘Just like the locusts,’ said Withers.



‘What do you mean?’ asked Maxwell, in a tone of some surprise.

‘ I was only thinking of that passage in the ninth chapter of the Revelation, which some people suppose to refer to the Moslem Turks,’ replied Withers. ‘ One can hardly be in Egypt without thinking of the prophecies that have been fulfilled here.’

‘ Our enthusiastic friend will, doubtless, see wonders to which we are sadly blind,’ said Mr. Warrington, sarcastically.

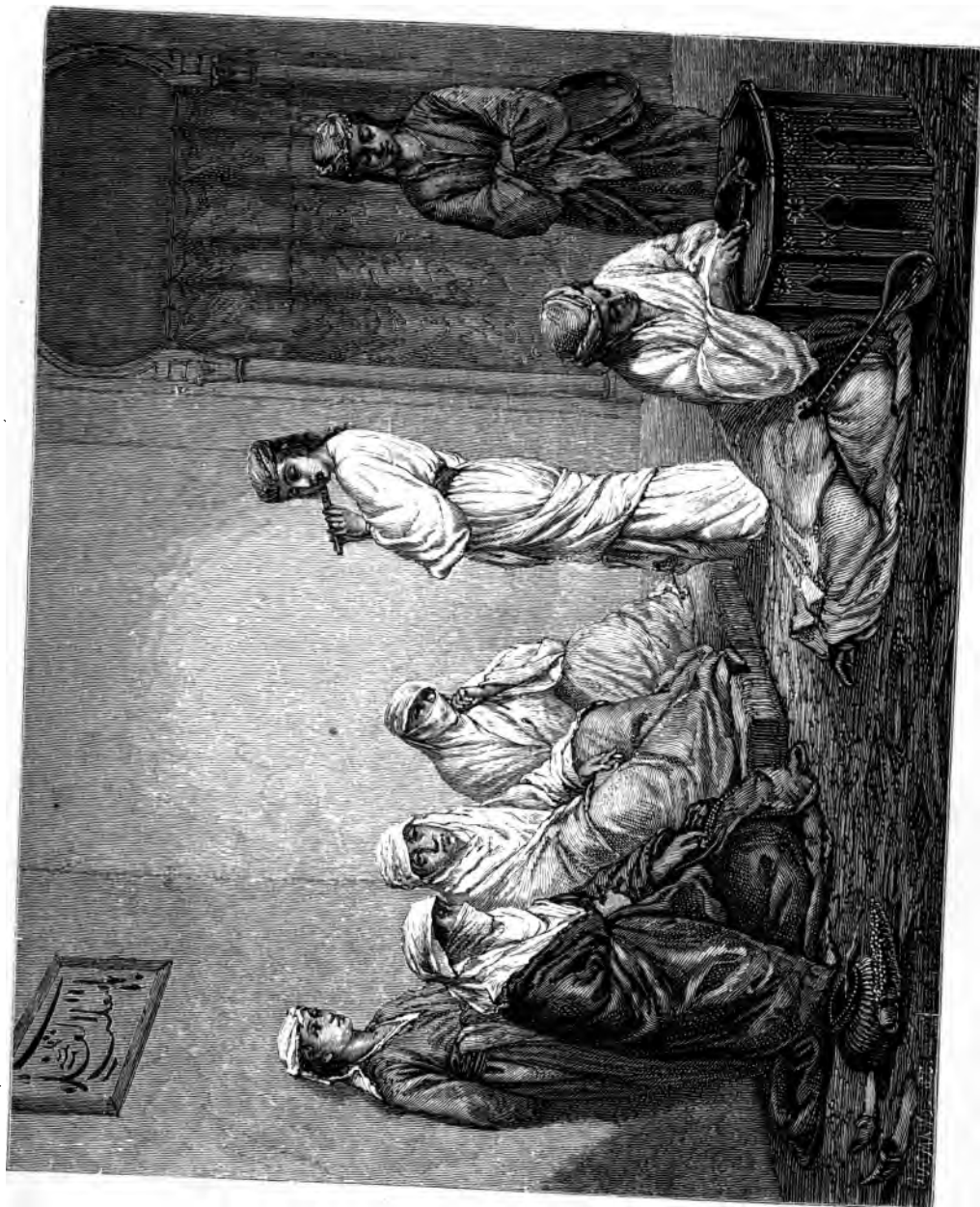
Edwin Withers looked as if he could have said much in answer ; but he did not speak, and after a silence of a minute or two Martin asked,—

‘ Where are the ruins, papa ? I expected to see the place crammed with them ; but there are nothing but windmills and common houses just round here ! Where is that old lighthouse of Pharos, that was one of the seven wonders of the world ; and those temples of Serapis and Neptune that you were talking about ; and the Museum, and the Theatre, and the Amphitheatre, and the “Soma,” where Alexander the Great was buried ? I can’t see a sign of such things !’

‘ No,’ replied his father ; ‘ because almost all the old town was destroyed long ago. This is really a modern city now ; and I believe that Pompey’s pillar and one of Cleopatra’s needles are nearly the only old things left standing. We must take a look round us, and then get on to Cairo, the present capital, called by the Arabs “the Victorious,” as soon as your mother and sisters are ready for a long railway journey.’

They were quite ready in a day or two ; but, meantime, the ladies received an invitation to the harem of a rich merchant, to whom, through Herr Keller, Mr. Warrington had been introduced, and who assured them that their visit would afford much pleasure to his wives.

Mr. Warrington conducted them to the door, where, of course,



LADIES OF THE HAREM.



he was obliged to leave them, and at which they were met by a female slave, who introduced them through a long passage into the ladies' sitting-room. Thus they saw the inmates before they were perceived by them, and noticed that three of them were seated on a low cushion listening in an indifferent way to the performance of a young girl on a flute, while another girl stood motionless with a tambourine in her hand. A fourth lady was reclining on the ground, and amusing herself with a tortoise, while various attendants stood about the room.

As soon as the entrance of the English ladies was perceived, the utmost delight was evinced ; and each one seemed to vie with the other in showing them attention. But it was easy to see that a good deal of form and order prevailed in this family, and that the etiquette which was observed did much towards keeping down any outbreak of ill-feeling or jealousy which might exist. One lady, the elder wife, was apparently mistress of the house ; she seemed to consider it but natural that other and younger wives should have superseded her in her husband's affection, at which she fretted less than might have been expected, consoling herself with domestic matters, and taking on herself to act a mother's part towards a mere girl, who had lately been introduced into the house, and who was now sick. But it was easy to see that a dreadful feud subsisted between two of the other ladies.

They all seemed to live in great luxury, and to be treated with deference by their slaves, who now, at a certain signal, brought in a rich repast, to which our English ladies were invited. Meantime, the harem ladies amused themselves by examining their guests' garments, and by exhibiting their own ; and, like children, they chatted away about their various amusements, and the visits which they were accustomed to receive from female friends.

It was altogether a favourable view of harem life ; and yet never before had Florence felt such a yearning desire to tell to any human being those good news which probably they had never heard, and which it seemed likely they might never have an opportunity of hearing ; and all night long did she lie awake trying to form schemes for doing them good.

They started for Cairo next day, and that hundred and twenty miles were full of interest, carrying them from one extremity of the Delta to its head, and crossing both the Rosetta and Damietta branches of the Nile ; ‘ the only two now left,’ as Mr. Warrington remarked to the boys, ‘ though the ancients always speak of seven.’

‘ Am I then an enthusiast when I see in this a fulfilment of the words of Isaiah, who said that “ the waters should fail from the sea, and the river be wasted and dried up ; that the brooks of defence should be emptied and dried up ; and that the paper-reeds by the brook should wither, be driven away, and be no more ? ” ’ asked Edwin Withers. ‘ We all know what pools and canals there used to be, and how large and abundant the papyrus of Egypt once was ; but what have we seen of these things as we came along ? ’

A shrug of the shoulders was all the reply made by Mr. Warrington ; but Maxwell and Newton both seemed struck ; and Annie said,—

‘ Oh, Mr. Withers, do show me all the chapters in the Bible about Egypt when we get to Cairo ! ’

Here there was a sudden cry of—

‘ Cairo ! Cairo the grand ! Cairo the victorious ! ’ from Martin, whose head was out of the opposite window ; and thus the conversation for that day was stopped.

It was evening, and the golden beams of the sun were falling on

the many turrets and minarets that rose above the smaller houses of the city ; the river also was seen winding along the valley ; and a range of hills on either side shut in the landscape.

‘ Ah, we are in Egypt now, without any mistake !’ cried Newton. ‘ And does this town stand exactly on the ruins of old Memphis ?’

‘ No,’ said his uncle ; ‘ that was about ten miles distant : but only two or three little villages mark the spot where the capital of Lower Egypt once stood. See, there are the white marble tombs of the Mamelukes — at least I think so, judging by the pictures which I have seen of them ; and those which look as if they were built of a kind of sandstone are, I conclude, the tombs of the sultans. The sun-light makes them appear quite golden. What do you say to taking a house here for a month or so all to ourselves ? They say, that if one goes to an hotel one might as well be in England ; and, I suppose, you don’t want that ?’

‘ I’m going to learn Arabic,’ said Newton, decidedly, ‘ so I should like it for one.’

‘ I expect you’ll become a very perfect scholar in a month’s time,’ returned his cousin Maxwell, laughing : ‘ but, however, I like the plan as well as you do.’

And so, fortunately, did all the rest ; so it was at once agreed on ; and there was only a little delay in carrying it out, caused by the difficulty of finding a house ; and meantime they were obliged to take refuge at the inn.

At length, a new house, and one which the owner declared could be ready in a few days, was taken ; and each day some one visited it to see how the work was going on.

It did not progress very fast : and, indeed, though the workmen

were locked in to prevent them from playing truant, yet it was shrewdly suspected that when not watched they were generally asleep. So, getting out of all patience, Maxwell declared that he should go and take possession; and that, done or undone, the fellows should turn out next day, on which Withers, Newton, and Martin, protested that they would accompany him and show the men how to work. It was a new kind of occupation for them—that of cleaning windows, putting up shelves, &c.; but, according to Martin, ‘very good fun:’ and when the young ladies, all three of them, came next morning to do the sweeping and dusting, their merriment got to its height, while the workmen stood by in stupid amazement, but still doing nothing.

Martin proved himself a first-rate hand; and as soon as the house was in something like trim he started off to fetch his parents, to whom, on their way back, he chose to act as guide, running before them all the way, and crying out in true Arab fashion, only in an English version, ‘O man, O donkey, O chickens, get out of the way with you!’

As soon as they were settled and had partaken of their evening meal, the whole company ascended to the house-top, a resort which, as it was winter-time, they often afterwards found to be very delightful; and from thence they looked down on a lively scene,—the shoe-bazaar and coffee-house being both close by, and the streets filled with specimens of many nations.

‘That is a Copt, mamma,’ said Martin; ‘I’ve learnt him already. He’s descended from the good old Egyptians, they say; and that’s my donkey-boy. I’m going to patronise him considerably, for he’s a sharp fellow, and knows a little English. Donkey-boys swarm



here, you know, and every one rides because there are no cabs ; so you'll have to condescend, too, if you mean to see anything,

mamma. Look, there's a Fellah woman with her children ; there's an Italian ; and there's a Maltese : but the Europeans are all Franks here, you must understand, and we among the rest ; and we all drink, and eat pork.'

'Do we?' said his mother, laughing ; 'well, I did not know that before. I don't find that either one or the other happens to agree with me.'

'Ah, but that's nothing ; you *are* a Frank, you know : and look, there goes a Bedouin Arab. Doesn't he look grand, though ?—the wild old fellow !'

'I shall go and see a pyramid or two to-morrow—the largest, perhaps, if I can,' remarked Maxwell : 'let me see ; they are built of Syene marble, or red granite—arn't they ? And the largest is between 400 and 500 feet high. We can walk up outside, I suppose ; or, rather, the ladies can be dragged up by Arabs. Who'll go with me ?'

Every one, of course ; and they had a delightful day, and brought home several sketches, as well as a great deal of information to be entered in the journal.

'How I wish I could have read those hieroglyphics !' exclaimed Newton ; 'it's most extraordinary that they are not rubbed down flat, and worn away after so many ages, and that they are so clean, too.'

'All owing to the dry climate, my dear fellow,' said Maxwell, who overheard them. 'It never rains here more than a dozen times a-year, and in Upper Egypt not at all. We must go and see the Obelisk of Heliopolis as soon as we can. I expect you will admire that.'

There were all kinds of wonders to be seen in and near Cairo ; and the country all around was so lovely, that it tempted frequent

rambles. Then Mrs. Warrington became very fond of spending a good deal of time in the desert, where the air was so much fresher than in the city; and often they would hire donkeys, and go out to pass the middle of the day under the rocks, from whence often such lovely views were to be had as afforded plenty of employment for Sophia's pencil.

Thus the time passed very quickly, and the day, at length, came for proceeding to Suez to meet their expected relatives.

Mr. Warrington had proposed going with only one son to bear him com-



pany ; but, as the ladies protested against being cheated of a view of the Red Sea, it was decided that they should go *en masse*, and so present themselves when the vessel entered the harbour of Suez.

Of course it was an extraordinary surprise and great delight to both Mr. and Mrs. Francis Warrington, the latter of whom was much revived by her voyage, and not only delighted at the prospect of a home prepared for her in Cairo, but equally so with the proposed trip ; so, as soon as she was a little rested, a large barge was hired with all necessary fittings, and a sufficient crew, cook, cawass, and dragoman ; and then all prepared to start. On the evening previous to their leaving Cairo most of the family had ascended to the house-top to take a last view of the city, while Maxwell and Florence, Edwin Withers and Newton, remained conversing at the window of the front sitting-room.

Maxwell had been twitting Edwin on his solitary walks, and telling him that he knew well enough that he had been ‘ practising parson,’ as he called it, every day since they came ; until at last Edwin was obliged to allow that, in truth, he had been trying to make out what was done in the city as well as in all Egypt for the evangelization of the people, and that he had that day met with a missionary, from whom he had learnt much that was interesting.

‘ Well,’ said Maxwell, ‘ as this is holiday time, I should have thought your conscience might have been satisfied without all this. You’ll have work enough by-and-bye.’

‘ I am sorry you think so badly of me as to imagine that, with the feelings which you suppose me to have, I could ever have chosen the ministry as a profession,’ answered Edwin, quietly ; but he knew that Maxwell did not always mean what he said when

he made such remarks, and added, 'Let me turn the tables. Can you, calling yourself a Christian, quietly see these people living in degradation, and dying in misery, and yet not either go a step out of your way to help them, or even care to ask whether others are doing anything?'

Maxwell only answered by making a strange grimace: but at that moment Newton, who for some minutes had been silently leaning against the windows, thoughtfully listening to what passed, exclaimed,—

'Mr. Withers, I've just thought of something; look at that coffee-shop down there! I can see Turks, Caireens, Copts, and Bedouins,—all sitting smoking together, there are more than twenty of them; and presently the story-teller will come in, and they will have something out of the "Thousand and One Nights." But, do you know, the rule is, "first come, first served." Any one that asks for a story, and sends a present at the same time, gets it. What if we sent them this Arabic Testament? There's Martin's donkey-boy, and he'll take it in.'

'The Testament is mine, Newton!' exclaimed Florence; 'take it, with this piece of money, and be quick, for there goes the man!'

'Stay, Miss Warrington: it may get you into trouble,' interposed Edwin, laying his hand on Newton's shoulder.

'And if it does, Mr. Withers?' she answered, as her eye kindled with animation. 'Are we never to run any risks?'

So Newton slipped away from Edwin's hold, and was soon back at the window, where, in the deepening twilight, all four breathlessly listened, until the sounds of well-known Scripture names told them that the story of peace was being read in that Egyptian coffee-house.

CHAPTER X.

WHAT a delicious voyage that was up the Nile! And how lovely the river looked with those twistings and turnings, which show so little on a map! Yet the country, at least all below the Delta, is only a narrow strip of country, shut in on either side by ranges of mountains, and on the Arabian side by deserts also.

Groups of palm-trees, and especially the date-palm, and another kind called the doum-tree, the fruit of which is as large as an orange, appeared here and there; while plantations of the sugar-cane, corn-fields, or fields bearing some other kind of produce, abounded everywhere. Indeed, owing to the inundation of the Nile, and the rich manure which it brings up from the south, scarcely an inch of land lies barren in all Egypt; and such is its fertility that no Sabbath year is required. Some fields, in fact, yield several harvests in one year; and although this was about Christmas-time, yet sowing and reaping were both going on, turn where they would.

Here and there little white Fellah villages appeared among the trees; and the Fellah women might be seen on the banks dressed in their loose blue cotton gowns, and with baskets of linen on their shoulders. The Fellahs are the labourers of Egypt.

Then a Coptic monastery might be seen; for the Copts were



BANKS OF THE NILE.

converted in the second century, and they still call themselves Christians.

Sometimes they would come to some ruin, and land to inspect it; and on one occasion it turned out to have once been a brigand village: and in another place, when Martin entered a house, he found it full of the skeletons of cats.

A curious group of wild Bedouin Arabs passed them here, apparently going up to buy corn. First came a young girl seated on a dromedary, which she rode without saddle or bridle. She fixed her large eyes in surprise on the party as she passed them, but stayed not to inquire who they were. Next came a tall man mounted on a camel, carrying a long Arab rifle, and his loose drapery flowing in the wind—a splendid figure he was! Then came others of the same company, all more or less striking in appearance; but their attention was riveted on an old man, seemingly the head of the party. His face was tanned to a kind of copper colour; he had a long white beard, and wore a striped brown and white *abba*, or cloak, and a yellow scarf. Though evidently very poor, his venerable and commanding manner was most remarkable.

Many large towns had once stood on those banks; and here and there one still remained of some importance. Syout, the third in rank—that is, after Cairo and Alexandria—with its white domes and minarets, looked well against the Libyan hills; and the beautiful cascade below the tower excited much admiration. Then there was Kenēh, and the ancient Tentyris, where Cleopatra built the temple of Dendera; and at each they rested awhile.

But when Thebes came in sight everything else was forgotten; and even the sailors seemed to catch something of the excitement of our party, which they showed by commencing a wild kind of dance,

and chanting a native air, to the noisy accompaniment of their *tarabouk*, or drum. But as the performance ended in a loud laugh, it was pretty clear that no patriotic chord had been touched ; and in some disgust the boys sprang on shore, and hurried off to the ruins. They were soon standing before those massive pillars of the external wall of the old temple of Karnak, which are covered, as nearly every building is, with hieroglyphical writings, and of which, as Mr. Warrington told them, the oldest part was built by Osirtesen I.

Annie was so enthusiastic in her admiration, that Martin began again to tease her about her architectural taste : but Newton was most eager about the history of Thebes.

‘ Was it, or Memphis, the older ? ’ he asked.

‘ Why, when Abraham was in Egypt, it is thought that the tenth king was reigning in Memphis,’ replied Withers ; ‘ but Thebes was older, and probably then its kings had the upper hand ; and This, which the Greeks called Abydos, was older still : so there’s for you ! ’

‘ But we don’t know anything about these kings—do we ? ’

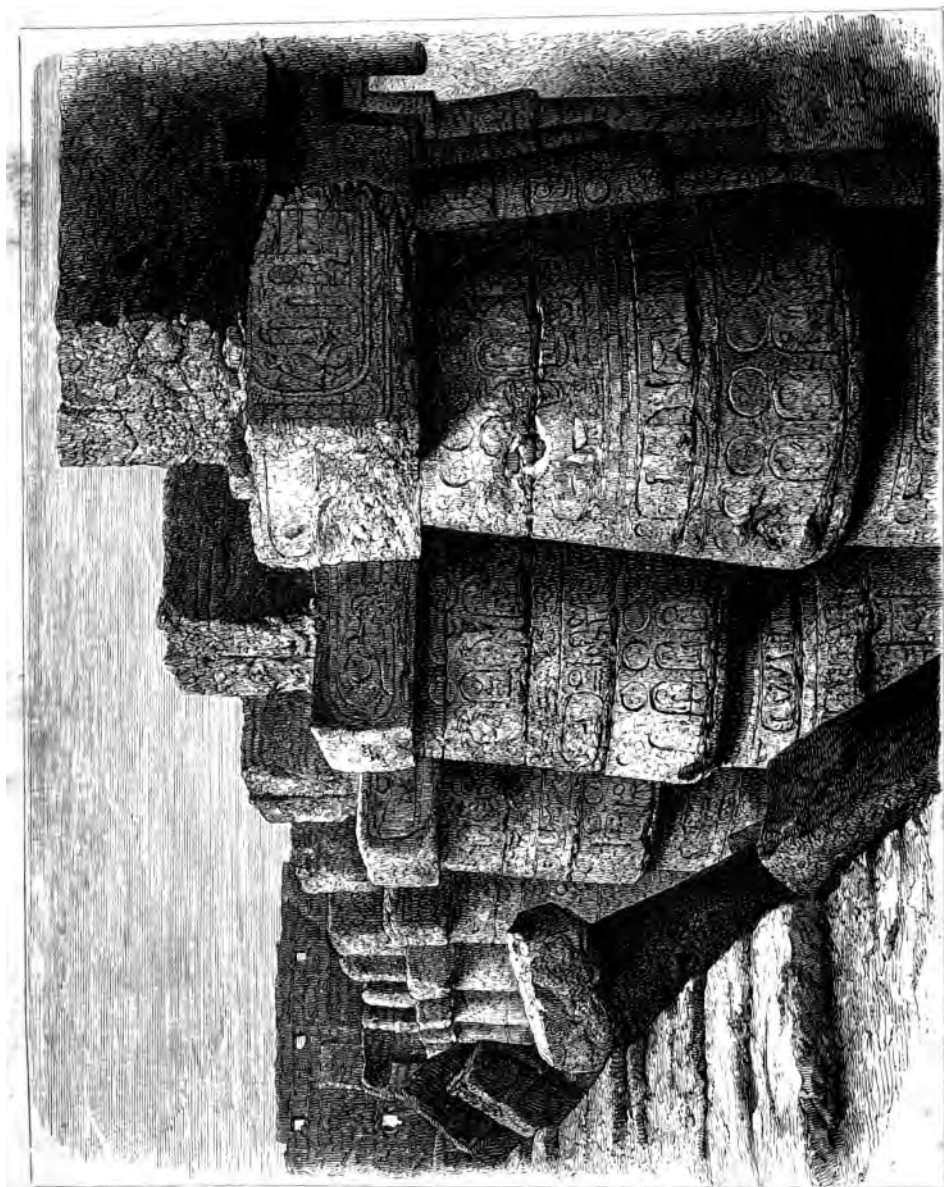
‘ Yes ; they wrote their histories on these stones ; and, of late years, people have learnt to read the “ picture-writing.” ’

‘ But before that did no one know anything ? ’

‘ Oh, yes ; we have a fragment of the history of Manetho, a priest who lived in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and who wrote in Greek. Besides which, Herodotus, the father of history, who visited Egypt about B.C. 454, has told us a good deal about them.’

‘ I wonder who was the first king of all ? ’ said Annie.

‘ The first that we know of was named Menes,’ replied Withers ; ‘ but, I suppose, they had kings very soon after Noah’s time. You



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WALLS OF THE TEMPLE OF KARNAK.

know in the Bible the country is sometimes called "the land of Ham."*'

'The Egyptians themselves called it Kem, or Chem, which means "black,"' said Mr. Warrington: 'what do you gather from that?'

'I believe that some think that the words are akin, Chem or Cham, from Ham,' answered Withers. 'It might, I suppose, refer either to the soil or to the inhabitants.'

'At any rate, Egypt is a Greek word,' said Maxwell; 'that is certain enough. But what about this Menes? for I'm not up in the subject. Did he make the famous tablet of Abydos?'

'Certainly not,' said his father; 'that was carved by Ramses II., who reigned about the time of the judges of Israel, when Egypt was at the height of its prosperity. He was one of their greatest conquerors; and besides that, he outdid all the other Pharaohs in the splendour of the temples with which he adorned Egypt.'

'Well, we must not forget,' interposed Mrs. Warrington, 'the other great ruin—the palace of Luxor, which we have still to examine.'

'And the tombs,' said Sophia; 'and the musical statue made by Amunothph III.'

'Yes; those tombs,' said her father: 'they contain the most ancient paintings extant. The Egyptian paintings have lived, while those of Greece and Rome are mostly lost; and I believe we shall find that they tell us a great deal about the domestic manners of the old inhabitants.'

'Did the Jews live in this part when they were in Egypt?' asked Annie, innocently.

'The Jews!' said Newton. 'I should think not, indeed! Why,

* Ps. cv. 23, 27.

don't you know they were in the land of Goshen, just between Canaan and the Nile—up in the north?’

‘Moses is supposed to have been brought up near Heliopolis, a seat of great learning near Memphis,’ said Withers, ‘where the Jews afterwards had a settlement in the time of the Babylonish captivity. Do you remember what prophet they brought down to Egypt against his will?’

‘I know,’ said Newton, after a minute’s pause: ‘it was Jeremiah; and people say that they stoned him to death.’

‘The Jews always had a strange hankering after the land where they had been in bondage, and they lived in considerable numbers about Heliopolis, in the time of the Ptolemies,’ continued Withers. ‘I suppose you know, Master Newton, that it was by the order of Ptolemy Philadelphus that the Septuagint, or Greek version of the Old Testament, was made?’

‘No, I didn’t,’ said Newton. ‘But now I want to ask you something else;—what was the reason why “shepherds were an abomination to the Egyptians?”’

‘It is supposed because the Hyksos, or shepherd Arab kings, had conquered the country, and had only been driven out a short time before Jacob’s arrival,’ said Withers.

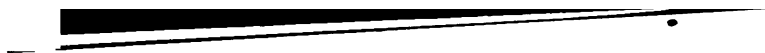
‘What sort of language did the Egyptians speak, papa?’ said Annie.

‘A very guttural one, my dear, and very like the present Coptic.’

‘Come round and look at this splendid old gateway here!’ cried Maxwell, who had gone on in front of the others. ‘There ought to be something on this about some of their old heroes, I should say. Did you ever see anything like it in your lives?’

And eagerly did the young ones rush on to obey his summons,





while the rest of the party speedily came up with them ; and then every one set to work to try what they could make of the extraordinary representations by which it is covered. Indeed there was so much to be seen at Thebes, that day after day they lingered there ; and each day discovered more wonders than my space will allow me to describe.

But Thebes was not to be the end of their journey ; they had determined to push on as far as the Cataracts and the isle of Philæ ; so, after fully examining all that was to be seen of the remains of this ancient city, they betook themselves to the boat again, scarcely knowing what a serious business it would be to surmount these cataracts, which, when they appeared, caused considerable alarm to most of the ladies. But days, nay weeks, had elapsed before they reached this exciting point ; for the voyage was a long one, and there was much to be seen by the way.

When, at length, the isle of Philæ came in sight, they perceived that another—a sort of twin island—lay beside it ; and they had a lovely view of the Nile and of the surrounding country. In the foreground stood a ruined mosque ; and as the boat glided smoothly over the water Maxwell said,—

‘ I wonder whether we should have been allowed to do this in the olden time ? It seems very disrespectful to be rowing along a god.’

‘ A god ! what, did they worship the river ? ’ cried Annie.

‘ Worship ! Yes ; they worshipped nearly everything, you know : Ra, the sun ; Chem, the land of Egypt ; bulls,—you remember the bull Apis at Memphis that my father was telling you about ? But you would have been obliged to move out in the road, and respectfully let any common bull pass, too, I can tell you ! ’

‘ And then the cats, Annie,’ said Martin, laughing ; ‘ you’d

hardly have been allowed to pet them as you do Miss Rose. They had to be saved first if a house was on fire, and when they were dead they made mummies of them.'

'Isis was one of their great favourites, and her husband Osiris supposed to be the judge of the dead,' added his father: 'but, on the whole, their idolatry was certainly of a very low kind.'

'It was with "the gods of Egypt"* that Jehovah waged war in the plagues,' said Withers. 'Egypt was *base* in her objects of worship, and now she "has become," as it was foretold she should, "a base kingdom,"† the basest of all kingdoms, never again to rule over the nations.'

'I do not remember that passage,' replied Mr. Warrington, looking rather startled: and Martin added,—

'They certainly are base enough, if dirty habits are any sign of it. I never saw such dirty creatures in my life! Why, they say that children are never washed at all until they are seven years old—at least among the Fellahs and Arabs; and I'm sure they don't look as if they had ever been near water.'

'That is one reason, no doubt, why they are so subject to ophthalmia,' remarked his father. 'You know we have seen comparatively few people whose eyes looked as they ought to do.'

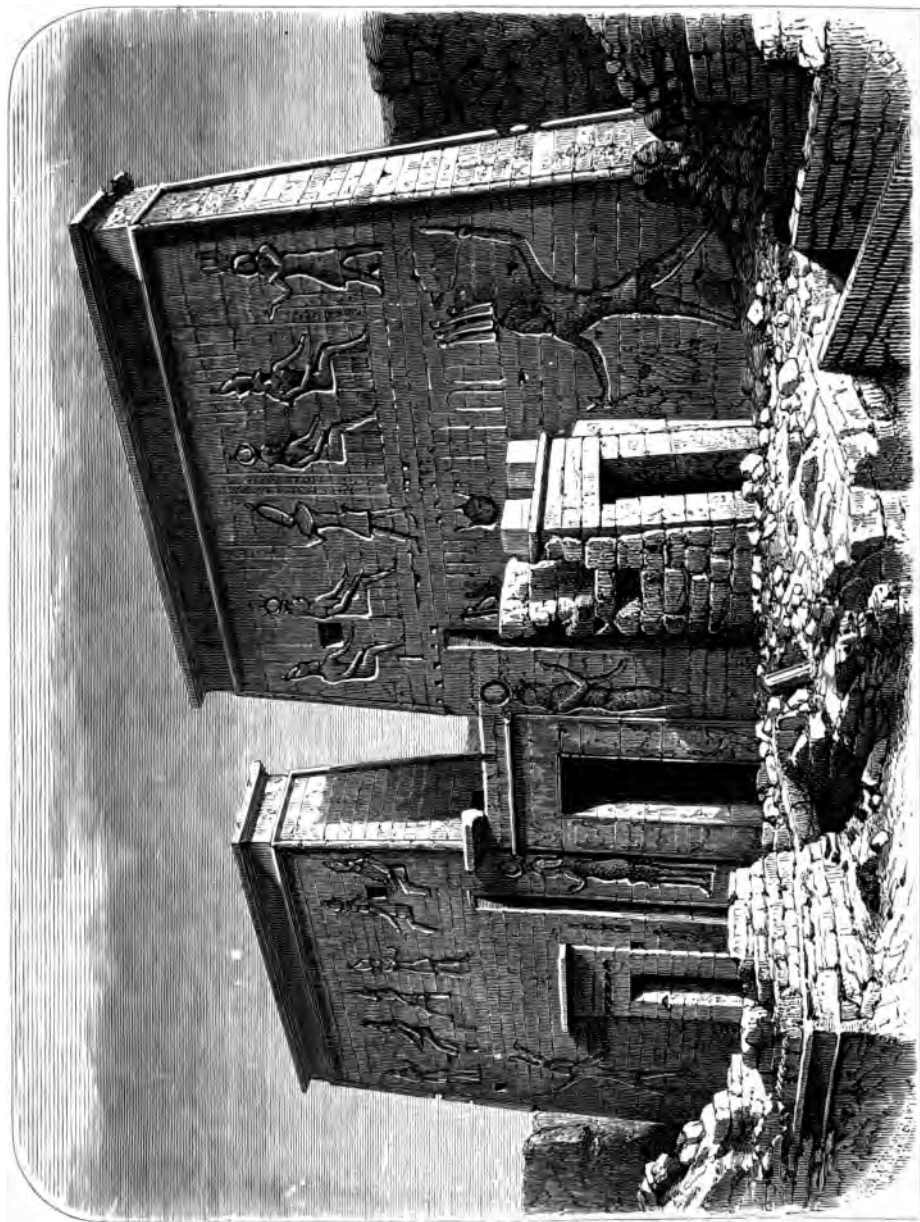
'And then they don't wear too many clothes,' added Newton, laughing; but at this moment the rowers lay-to under the island.

All hastened to land, and were assisted out of the boat by a number of Nubians, crying out, 'Allah is great!' and 'Allah is good!' in allusion to their escape from the dangers of the last part of their voyage, and, of course, expecting baksheesh in return.

The temple stood on the summit of the little isle, in the most verdant and peaceful spot; and an old man, who seemed to be the

* Exod. xii. 12.

† Ezek. xxix. 14, 15.



only resident inhabitant and the sole guardian of the isle, came forward to show them all its wonders. But he appeared to be perfectly indifferent both as to the religion and government of his country, and talked of Isis, Mahomet, and the Saviour, as if he esteemed them all alike.

Isis and her sister Hator are reckoned, he told them, to be the goddesses of this island; and he pointed out that the latter is usually represented with a crown of blue flowers, but that both bear the horns, and have the face of a heifer, the animal which is sacred to them. On many parts of the building, over the rude Egyptian work, they constantly found signs of the Roman dominion—heads of Augustus, Tiberius, and other emperors; and the old man pointed to each as works of art, but without showing the slightest preference for a Pharaoh, or a Ptolemy, or a Cæsar.

‘He is like all the rest of his countrymen,’ said Maxwell, turning away after listening to one of his long harangues; ‘no patriotism whatever!’

‘The isle of Philæ has its own particular history, you see,’ said Mr. Warrington, after they had duly examined all the ruins. ‘This temple was founded by the old Pharaohs; and we have seen enough to remind us of the Ramses and other early kings: but here we have, on this façade, a representation of Ptolemy Philometer; here a trace of Cleopatra’s hand; and here again a triumphal arch of Diocletian. Egypt, in fact, is here on a small scale. Then, being the key to the Cataracts, it formed a rampart of the Theban dynasties against the incursions of the Ethiopians, and their refuge when the Hyksos invaded the land. We do not find such very ancient ruins as in other parts; they are supposed to have been destroyed by Cambyzes. But the old idolatry lived on here after it had been crushed out in other parts and superseded by Greek and Roman

superstitions, and was only, at length, annihilated in the sixteenth century, by the Moslems, who have substituted nothing else.'

'Is not that just the sad thing about Egypt in general, papa?' said Florence. 'All the grandeur of former days is gone, and nothing worth speaking of has come in its place. It seems like one great open grave. Is there no hope for Egypt?'

'I confess that I see none,' said her father. 'It has had its day.'

But Florence looked disappointed, and turned to Edwin as if expecting something more from him.

'I fear then that you will call me an enthusiast, sir,' he said, 'if seeing, as I confess I do, the accomplishment of the foretold desolation of Egypt and her gods, I venture to expect the fulfilment of others, and look to her future with considerable hope. Isaiah says that "there shall one day be an altar to the Lord in the midst of Egypt;" that "they shall cry unto the Lord and He shall send them a Saviour, and a great one;" that "He would smite *and heal* Egypt;" and that "in that day Israel shall be the third with Egypt and Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land."* Is not this an assurance that for that land, where our Saviour found a refuge in His infancy—where St. Mark preached and Apollos was born—good is yet in store?''

Mr. Warrington made no answer; but as they walked on to look at a splendid colonnade, consisting of thirty columns, no two of whose capitals were alike, Newton said,—

'Isn't it very strange that Egypt has gone on sinking and sinking, in spite of all the advantages which it has had? Why, even in old times, Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph didn't live there, I suppose, without telling the people about the true God; and besides, the whole nation of the Jews were there for so long!'

* Isa. xix. 19-24.





‘And got more harm than they ever did good,’ answered Withers. ‘Don’t you remember how eager they were to go back again as soon as any danger appeared, and how ready to get a *calf* and worship it—in imitation, no doubt, of the bull Apis? And many Egyptian customs are clearly pointed at and forbidden in the Jewish law, which shows that they were inclined to follow them: for instance, the Egyptians worshipped the sun and the stars; but whoever of the Israelites did so was to be “stoned to death.”* The Egyptian priests kept their heads shaved; while the Jewish ones were forbidden to make any baldness, or even to cut the corner of their beards.† The Egyptians marked their bodies in honour of their gods; but the Jews were prohibited from cutting their flesh.‡ The Egyptians planted groves near their temples; but the Jews were not to plant any trees near the altar of the Lord.’§

‘But in Christian times the Gospel was preached in Egypt,’ rejoined Newton.

‘Yes, and received for a time; for there were Christian churches here as in other parts of the East. It was when all these churches had grown corrupt and cold that the Moslems came and made such havoc among them.’

‘And so the first of the kingdoms has come to be the last,’ said Newton, thoughtfully.

‘And a warning to us not to trust to any outward advantages,’ added Edwin.

A sudden cry of alarm from some of those behind interrupted them here; and, on turning back, they saw that Mrs. Francis Warrington had stumbled over some of the loose stones, and

* Deut. xvii. 2-5.

† Lev. xxi. 5.

‡ Lev. xix. 28.

§ Deut. xvi. 21.

fallen to the ground. Happily, however, she was found only to have sustained some rather severe bruises; and they were soon able to proceed with their ramble over this beautiful and romantic little island. The two boys pushed on considerably before the others, in order to indulge their climbing propensities more freely; and when once out of hearing, Martin took occasion to warn his cousin against putting any more of such incautious inquiries as he had just been proposing to Mr. Withers.

‘It only brings down a lecture on us, and that’s just what I hate!’ he exclaimed.

‘You said so as we came in the train from Strasburg,’ answered Newton, quietly: ‘but if you have forgotten our talk that day, why, I haven’t—nor a good many that we’ve had since; and I know what I wish’

He was prevented, however, from explaining what that wish was by a loud call from Maxwell, that it was time to be thinking of getting back to the boat; for our travellers had now reached the limit of their tour, and began to contemplate returning home.

On account of Mrs. Francis Warrington’s still delicate health, the homeward journey was to be performed gently and in a leisurely manner; while Edwin had to hasten back.

But, as it would not interest our readers to go over the same ground with them, I shall merely state that by the middle of the next summer they were all quietly settled again, and Florence once more happily at work; while before its close the Rev. Edwin Withers paid a visit to Sunnington Hall, which proved to be of considerable interest to one member of the family.

